



'The Phoenix' - Whitehouse News



"We Rise By Lifting Others"

February 2016

Principal's Scribble...

Dear Parent,

We are coming to the end of our three year **school development plan**. We have enjoyed lots of success and the pupils have thrived.

However, we want to do even better in 2016/17 to 2018/19! This week I **texted parents an online survey**. I would be very grateful if every family would complete the survey by **Friday 4th March**.

More exciting news for our community is the development of the new **Family Support Hub Network for Newtownabbey**.

The Hub is a group of organisations including **community, voluntary and statutory who deliver support services** to children aged up to 18 and their families.

Support offered includes: family support, emotional health and wellbeing, mentoring, housing, behavioural needs, drugs and alcohol, debt and benefits and advice and guidance.

How does it work? You can complete a referral form yourself or, with your permission, this can be completed by your GP, health visitor, child's school or community group.

If you would like more information you can contact the hub directly at 02894467345.

Email: familysupporthubs@actionforchildren.org.uk

Website - www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Alternatively you can speak to Ms Kennedy (SENCO) or Mrs Watson (Pastoral Care) for more information.

Yours sincerely,

F. Bailie

'Festival of Words 2016'

'A Celebration of Literacy and Friendship'

On Monday 29th February we will proudly launch our third annual 'Festival of Words'. This week long festival will raise the profile of literacy and encourage children to become enthusiastic about their learning.

Earlier this week a timetable of the week's events was sent home. Please take time and read it as a family. This event is a great example of how we bring together super teaching with a really fun set of experiences.

Key activities will include:

- ◆ Working with Professional Writers
- ◆ Writing with Published Poets
- ◆ Drawing with Real Illustrators
- ◆ Writing, Spelling and Drama Competitions

When we compare our literacy scores to other similar primary schools in Northern Ireland we believe **we are in the top 10%**! We strive towards these standards by working hard but also by trying to make literacy fun. Please try to engage in this week with your family.

Then on the **week beginning the 7th March** we will have our annual **Scholastic Book Fair**.

There will be an opportunity to purchase books each morning from 8.30am and from 2pm to 3.30pm each afternoon. 60% of all sales from the book fair will be donated to our school. **We intend to invest all the commission in library.** In particular, we hope to buy new books for our Year 3 and 4 pupils. This will include a whole range of exciting new novels.



"Learning to Live"

'people Who Help Us' Visit Nursery



We had a visit from a hairdresser who put a fancy apron on us and styled our hair.

We had our very own hospital imaginative area!



In nursery this month we have been looking at how people from the community can help us in a variety of ways. We have been fortunate enough to have some special visitors to our nursery. During this we had opportunities to ask lots of questions and investigate some of their special equipment.

The nurses were great at telling us all about how they help patients.



Blueprint 2020

September 2015/16 sees the third year of our dynamic six year school development strategy. This innovative and far ranging plan will bring our school to the next level in terms of learning and services to our community.

In this section we want to share some of our key strategic goals for the year ahead and then focus in on a few of the key innovations. Over the next year we will regularly report on what has been achieved and the new projects that we develop.

Strategic Leadership

- Introduce 'A Catalyst of Change'. This is a 3 year Shared Education Project which aims to foster outdoor learning, S.T.E.M and community partnership.
- Create a new school development plan for 2016 - 2019.

Learning & Teaching

- Develop the way we teach and learn phonics, spelling and handwriting.
- Continue to enhance pupils' achievements in mathematics.
- Use our iPads, laptops and computers more effectively to support learning.
- In the Nursery encourage better use of our campus to enrich pupils' learning.

Ethos

- Put our 3 year Wellbeing Plan into practice.
- Encourage the work of our School Council as we work towards a Green Flag.

Campus

- Use our website to keep everyone informed about what is happening in school.

February Update:

- The launch of our new school website was one of the highlights of this month. We are delighted by the feedback we have already received about the site and the linked app. Over the next few months we will hope to expand the site extensively.
- The staff also completed some very significant work on updating our medium term literacy and numeracy planning. We believe this will help raise our standards even more in the coming years.
- The staff spent a very intense day during the February break evaluating the progress of our S.D.P. to date and visioning for the coming three years. We also developed an e-survey to help audit parents' views on the work of the school.

Diary Dates

FEBRUARY

- **29th** - 'Festival of Words 2016'

MARCH

- **2nd to 4th** - Shared Education Year 5 Family Residential
- **3rd** - World Book Day!
- **7th to 11th** - Scholastic Book Fair Week
- **8th** - Year 5 Early Man Workshop
- **16th** - Year 5 Uplift Drama Day

Easter Themed Assemblies

- **18th** - 'The Table'
- **21st** - 'The Cross'
- **22nd** - 'The Tomb'
- **23rd** - Early Closure for Easter Holidays

Nursery leave between 12pm and 12.15pm.

Y.1 & Y.2 pupils leave at 12pm with older siblings.

Y.3 & Y.4 pupils leave at 12.15pm with older siblings.

Year 5 to Year 7 leave at 12.30pm

- **24th - 1st April** - Easter Holidays!

APRIL

- **4th April** - School begins!
- **14th** - Year 5 Shared Education Science Night at 7pm.
- **20th** - 'Railway Children' Family Theatre Night (time to be confirmed.)

MAY

- **2nd to 6th** - May Holiday Week
- **9th May** - School begins!



Pastoral Care Team



Dear Parent,

As you are aware we have a very successful Pastoral Care Team. However, due to a forthcoming maternity and an illness, we have had to reorganise our team. From Monday 4th April our new Pastoral Care Team will be as follows:

Team Leader: Mrs R Watson

Assistant Leader: Miss C Hasson (Nursery to Year 4)

Assistant Leader: Mr G Harris (Year 5 to Year 7)

While our team has changed our commitment to provide great care to our families remains the same.



Special Easter Celebrations



As a school we take very seriously our responsibility to teach our pupils about key Christian celebrations. This year, starting on Friday 18th March there will be three assemblies to prepare children for Easter. The three main themes will include 'The Table', 'The Cross' and 'The Tomb'.

These fun and informative assemblies will help our pupils understand the significance of Easter and enjoy the celebrations.

In addition, on the 15th and 16th March Year 5 children, with friends in St. James' will be attending Easter Workshops in Whitehouse Presbyterian. This annual event is made even more special by the fact that children will be linking with pupils from St. James' through our Shared Education Programme.

Mr Bailie will also be sending home a family competition on Friday 18th. This will be an opportunity for parents to work through the Easter story with their children. As a school we are focused on striving to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils. We hope this build up to Easter will help reinforce our R.E. curriculum richly.

Get cracking and have a lovely Easter!