

St Botolph's Primary School

October Newsletter 2008

Celebrating our Differences:



This week we are making a few alterations to our usually weekly planned programme in school to 'Celebrate our Differences'. In every year group we have a small number of children from Ethnic Minority backgrounds. Some of these children have joined us not being able to speak any English at all, others were born in England but their origins and family come from many other countries both within and outside Europe. These children all bring a breath of diversity to St Botolph's that is crucial and we value the contribution that they and their families make to our school.

Each year group have chosen a different country to 'celebrate', often focusing on the country from which a class member may have come from. We will be looking at the cultural diversity and traditions of India, China, Spain, Poland, Kenya, Peru and Italy. Children who have a National Costume from one of these countries are encouraged to wear them to school this Friday.

This Friday we have two visitors in school all day who will be taking all the children through active and engaging workshops which support our 'theme' for this week. We have an African Drumming workshop and Indian Dancing. I'm confident that the children will really enjoy these workshops and gain a great deal from taking part. Our Assembly on Friday will incorporate work that has been done across the day with children showing the rest of the school some of their work. We are all looking forward to this very much. We hope that the E.T. will also be able to attend this assembly on Friday to 'capture' some of the children showing their new found skills in drumming or dance!

Starting School September 2008

We have had 54 children start school this September 2008. They have made an excellent start to school and settled really well and are beginning to make great progress. Speaking to our Reception teachers and Teaching Assistants who work very closely in supporting these youngest children in the school, they remark how well they are all doing.

We try to ensure that the start of school at St Botolph's is as smooth as possible and a positive experience for both the children and parents alike. We plan the phase of starting school carefully and want every parent to feel 'informed' as much as possible. If

we can improve this process in any way we want to. To this end we sent out a parent/carer questionnaire at the beginning of October to the parents of our Reception children asking for feedback and comments. To date we have received 30 replies. 98% agreed and strongly agreed that the information presented/made available was both appropriate and informative and that their son/daughter had made a good start to school. One parent would have welcomed a parents meeting scheduled in the evening. This is something that we will take on board and consider for next summers' 2009 new intake. Thank you very much to all those parents who returned their questionnaires.

Grand Parents Day

We were delighted with the number of 'Grandparents' who were able to join with us and support the school in raising funds for Macmillan nurses. This is a charity very close to the heart of St Botolph's. It was a lovely day with so many positive, encouraging comments made. With your support we managed to raise £422.86 which has been forwarded.

Open Mornings at St Botolph's

This is something new that we have introduced from this September. Each term it is planned that every year group will open their doors for a morning. This is intended to be very informal but provide an opportunity for friends and family to spend a short amount of time in their son or daughters' class. Teachers will often plan a practical activity that parents/carers can join in with and support their child. They will not replace our Parents' Evenings which are held three times a year where more formal discussions re progress and attainment levels can be discussed. Our morning challenge time is only very short and often rushed especially if parents have two children in separate classes that they wish to settle. To date this term, years 1,6 and 5 have held their 'Open Mornings' and early responses from parents are extremely positive. If we can improve on these sessions please let us know as they are still in the very early stages of planning and we aim to get them to a point where they are as effective as possible for as many parents as possible.



Shoe Box Appeal

This year we will be collecting shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child. A separate letter and leaflet will be with you sometime this week explaining all about it and all completed shoeboxes will be collected in school from Nov 3rd – Nov 17th.

Parking and the 'End of the School Day'

I am disappointed that again I have to comment on parking. Earlier in the term I asked our local PCSO to spend a short amount of time outside school at the end of a school day. They could not pass anything positive onto our governors but only paint a gloomy picture as to the inconsiderate parking of a few parents and the added congestion that is caused by both our school and the secondary school spilling out onto Oundle Road at the same time. The governors will continue to monitor the situation and work with the local authority to find the best possible solution. Changing the time of the end of the school day continues to be an option that will be considered. However, **no** decisions have yet been made to change the time we finish. In the meantime, please continue to park in a considerate way and remain patient, particularly as we all try leaving the school grounds. Thank you.

Year 3 visit to Flag Fen

We got off the coach and then we got told where Flag Fen got its name. If we split it into two and we started with Flag there are little Flag Irises that look like tiny bananas. The Flag Irises were there in Roman and Celtic times! The Fen bit means that Flag Fen is on the very edge of the Fens. Next I went to do pottery with the rest of my group and we were shown some of the Roman and Celtic pots. They were real and 2,000 years old and were small and full size – wow how amazing is that! It was fun making the Roman and Celtic pots and after we had made them we were allowed to decorate them. After that we went and looked at artefacts. I stood and told the rest of my group about a Roman note pad and pen. I saw a beauty set, a back scraper, a surgery knife and a Roman note pad and pen! Next on our list we had to go on a lake side walk and we were allowed to go into a round house. It was smelly, dark, basic and amazing. I saw two boys playing a Roman game of draughts. Finally we went and smelt and tasted some herbs. We tasted a herb called fennel, it tasted like liquorice. We smelt lavender, burdock, bay leaves, soapwort and rosemary.

Report by Holly Farrow Class 3NN

Attendance Sept/Oct 2008

Key Stage 1				Key Stage 2	
Miss Evans	Reception	96.45%	Miss Noble	Year 3	98.47%
Mr Balaam	Reception	97.99%	Miss Murrell	Year 3	94.85%
Mrs Belcher /Miss Regis	Year 1	96.20%	Miss Brittain	Year 4	98.33%
Mrs Greene/MrsWilliams	Year 1	95.87%	Mrs Cronin	Year 4	96.79%
Mr File	Year 2	97.18%	Mrs Richardson	Year 5	97.18%
Mrs Fox/Mrs Wickham	Year 2	95.30%	Miss Hicks	Year 5	95.77%
			Mr Binmore	Year 6	94.87%
			Mrs McCay	Year 6	95.93%

Diary Dates

Friday 24 th October	Indian Dance and African Drumming Workshops
Friday 24 th October	Break up for half term
Monday 3 rd November	Return to school
Tuesday 4 th November	Circus Skills Day
Tuesday 4 th November	4JC Swimming
Wednesday 5 th November	Circus Skills Day
Friday 7 th November	Year 4 Open Morning 10.00 – 11.45
Tuesday 11 th November	4VB Swimming
Wednesday 12 th November	4VB Class Assembly
Friday 14 th November	Year 3 Open Morning 10.00 – 11.45
Tuesday 18 th November	4VB Swimming
Wednesday 19 th November	5CH Class Assembly
Friday 21 st November	Year 2 Open Morning 10.00 – 11.45
Tuesday 25 th November	4VB Swimming