

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **World Book Day**

This will be a lovely opportunity for you to share a wide variety of stories with your child. We have launched the event with an amazing 'The Masked Reader' assembly today, and you can enjoy the video on our website from this evening. Thank you for all your hard work with costumes and decorated creative craft items. We have special guest judges of costumes and creations and a whole-school assembly at 10:30 to announce prize winners. There are lots of other fun things happening too, including an alert that will sound out from the office at surprise times to announce 'DEAR' time (Drop Everything and Read!). Lots to chat to your child about tomorrow evening!

### **Children's Mental Health Week**

As part of Children's Mental Health Week in February, teachers have used resources from [Kooth](#), which had live stream students and activity sheets. We continue to link our personal and social education to kindness and respect. Many classes use yoga and relaxation sessions to support the children in understanding the importance of physical exercise but also being quiet and mindful. This has linked beautifully into work about staying safe on the internet - making the children aware of the ways in which technology is constantly changing, the importance of staying safe online and how taking a break from online activity can impact positively on our wellbeing. We have shared some useful resources at the bottom of our school [webpage](#).

It comes to my attention daily in conversations, news and unfortunately in dealing with young children who have suffered, that social media has much to answer for when it comes to our children's mental health. Please remember to model to the children we are responsible for how to live freely outdoors, face to face in good respectful relationships with the people in our lives. *Think before you post* is a key message both for adults and children. The Sleep Wellbeing assembly organised by Mrs Little and delivered by the school nurse last week to all KS2 pupils was really useful and well received.

### **Playtimes**

KS1 play equipment has been overhauled and a timetable for it introduced at an assembly, along with new playground games. The children enjoyed this so much that staff will continue to introduce old and new playground games for the next few weeks. The quiet garden and canopy areas are used daily by different groups on a rota also.

### **Babies**

It has been a season of new birth for the staff here. We celebrate with Mrs Hudson's family as they welcome baby Jasper into the world. Amazingly, our cook, Katie Tindall, also had a baby boy, Lucas, the same weekend! Mrs Lowther's family has also had the gift of new baby: Harry. All our babies and mums are doing well.

### **Outdoors**

As the weather has warmed this week, it has been great to see the children out appreciating the sunshine. Even in January, Year 1 and 2 were enjoying the firepit and had a wonderful afternoon celebrating their 50-marble jar treat. Also, Y4 and Y2 paired up, as did Y5 and Y1, to learn outdoor orienteering. This was a fantastic way to help younger pupils learn about this wonderful learning (and exercise) tool and helped the older ones to take responsibility for supporting others.

Mr. Buxton continues to develop a bird aviary at the bottom of the field. As the weather improves, more classes will be able to enjoy this facility. Both nursery and reception have enjoyed less muddy outdoor areas this spring, thanks to the tracks and beds that have been created by Bay Landscapes and the new reading shed and mud kitchen areas funded by FOHH.

Paul Rose delivered staff training on spirituality outdoors this week, which we all loved, as the weather was beautiful. Staff were given so many ideas on how to enjoy the peace and well-being we can gain from being in nature. I look forward to seeing as many classes out as possible as the weather improves.

### **Staffing**

Welcome to Cheryl Beck and Stuart Steele-Davidson who have joined us as mid-day supervisor and play workers.

We are preparing to say a very fond farewell to Miss Ashworth who has worked hard for nearly three years, completing her Early Careers Teacher Training successfully with us as well as developing various outdoor spaces and working tirelessly to help school towards achieving Eco-School status.

Mrs. Jessop, who has many years teaching experience, will take over from Amanda Barber in Reception after Easter. Mrs. Barber has served the school community faithfully for 17 years! Her positive impact on the Early Years is renowned in the local area. I am sure you will join me in thanking her for the immeasurable benefit she has had on children and families. She ensured a confident start to so many children's education, providing an incredible lasting and significant legacy. We wish both staff all the very best as they embark on their new adventures; they will be a huge miss to the Heron Hill family.