



AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Tel: 01603 441034 Email: office@avenuejunior.norfolk.sch.uk

Website: www.avenuejuniorschool.org Headteachers: Mrs Debbie Dismore/ Mr Mike Hooper

MARCH/APRIL NEWSLETTER 2019

Introduction

We are well and truly into Spring, the daffodils are out, the sun has been shining (or was!) and we are in our last week of the school term - how quickly the terms go. This term we have been very proud of our choirs and musicians. All our children play a very important part in the music of the school. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the children and, of course, Mr Taylor for their hard work in the St Andrew's Music Festival. Year 5 have thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Harry Potter World (thank you to the PTA for subsidising the cost of this visit), all classes visited Waterstones for World Book Day, Y3 visited Walsingham as part of the RE curriculum, Y4 are visiting Strangers Hall in Norwich and had a very exciting History Conference with Wensum Juniors and Y6 have recently returned from the Norfolk Lakes Residential and Ofsted paid us a visit. The result of the Ofsted Inspection will be published we believe after the Easter holiday and you will receive a letter outlining their findings. A very busy term for us all!

We have enjoyed seeing lots of you in school; the Reading Cafes were very well attended as well as the coffee drop ins. There will be more opportunities for you to get involved in school after the Easter break.

Our sporting teams have been doing particularly well with 4 children making it to the County Finals for Cross Country – a spectacular achievement - well done! In addition, our Y4 Korfball team won the Spring tournament at the UEA. The football teams have all performed well this year with the Year 5 under 10's squad reaching the Cup Final against Firside. Despite losing 3-0 the boys gave it their all and have their sights set on the Cup next year! Thanks to all squad members and parent support. Keep up the good work!

Easters of Norwich have kindly offered to donate groceries and fruit, on a weekly basis, for our breakfast club and Connexions. We would like to thank Peter and his team for this very generous donation.

Great news! Both Mrs Pereira and Mrs Powley have both welcomed a new son into their families! Both babies and mums doing well and we are looking forward to cuddles soon!

Have a good Easter break if we do not see you before then.

Debbie Dismore & Mike Hooper

Funding for schools

On the school's website you will find a letter from the association of headteachers in Norfolk with an update in regard to the very real funding crisis in education and how this is affecting Norfolk Schools. We too find ourselves in very challenging times and we have some very difficult budget decisions to make regarding the additional activities and support we offer at the school. I need to be open and honest with you in regard to the way the funding is affecting our school and I have also written to Clive Lewis to share my concerns. This coming year I have even less money than last year despite rising costs and an ever increasing need for support. Please be assured that we will continue to do our very best for every child in the school but there are real challenges we face.

Many parents have already approached me to ask how they can help. I know many of you will have heard throughout the country of the ways in which schools are trying desperately to save money. We are all in this situation and I find myself in a position that I never wanted to be in asking for parental help.

Firstly, a real plea is that payments are made for school trips, meals and music lessons on time. Every year we are left with quite an enormous bill where parents have just not paid. Whilst there are some occasions where parents have just forgotten and a reminder means that it is quickly paid there are also many bills left unpaid. The school always works with parents who sometimes struggle to keep up with payments and parents should always contact the school if this is the case so a plan can be put in place if possible. The unavoidable truth is the school cannot afford to pay outstanding debts and in a school this size these are quite substantial. For this reason we must insist that

- Music lessons must be paid for in the term they are taken. Spring invoices will be on parent mail by the end of this week. We apologise for the lateness of these invoices. Going forward the invoices will be posted the beginning of each term.
- Payment for school lunches must be made in advance on parent mail or on a Monday in school.
- Payments for Educational Visits will be invoiced much further in advance and unfortunately if we do not receive sufficient funds then I am afraid visits will be cancelled. Although we can support children who qualify for free school meals for some visits, this is not possible for all visits. The Pupil Premium plan on the website outlines the way in which the grant is spent which includes teaching and learning at the heart of the plan. We cannot support every visit for every child in school but can help parents by making a contribution from the grant where possible and signposting parents to different sources of help. Please always contact the school if you need this support.

A good way of supporting the school is through supporting PTA events as the amount of money raised contributes to a whole host of activities including forest schools, special events and specific fundraising events for example the proposed improvements to the playground equipment. Please see the flyer attached with this

Communication with staff

Thank you to those who have completed the survey regarding the ways in which we communicate with you. We will be reviewing all your comments over Easter in order to improve communication but I can already see that we must work towards a more streamlined communication in terms of emails. I will work with the office so that we are only sending emails once a week, on a Thursday, unless it is an emergency/ urgent. In the meantime, I would just like to advise you it is my recommendation to teachers that there is no expectation that they reply to emails or comments on Class Dojo (unless on a visit outside school hours) outside of the hours 8am – 5pm. Please do not expect a reply outside these times. All important messages and all emails to teaching staff should also go through the school office email office@avenuejunior.norfolk.sch.uk as this is a secure email and it will also allow us to deal with important emails if that member of staff is absent.

Uniform

We have noticed an increasing number of children who are not wearing the correct school uniform. It is an expectation of the school that all children will wear school uniform including the correct footwear. Details of what children must wear are available at <http://www.avenuejuniorschool.org/office/school-uniform/>.

Children must also have a set of PE clothes in school. There is an increasing number of children not bringing PE kit to school and this affects how quickly lessons can start. The school can provide a PE kit if you are unable to provide one – please see us in confidence.

Mobile phones and smart devices

A reminder that no mobile phone or smart devices are allowed in school for the following reasons:

- Electronic devices can disrupt learning, particularly if they are kept in pockets or desks. The alternative, i.e. keeping them in children's bags in the cloakrooms, may present opportunities for theft.
- Issues surrounding peer pressure and competitiveness may increase as a result of children bringing in mobile phones or electronic devices. There is also a greater risk of cyber bullying and potential for misuse, and increasingly so with devices that have internet access.
- To ensure the privacy and safety of all children.
- To limit the risk of damage to the emotional well-being of children, including access to potentially unsuitable materials.

Please note, this includes any watch that is capable of connecting to a mobile network or of sending messages. These items are not allowed in school.

There has been much in the media recently around children's access to the unsuitable material whilst online. If you would like some support in ensuring your settings are as safe as they can be do not hesitate to contact our Parent Support Advisor or you will find useful information on our website.

POLITE NOTICE

Please note that our school site operates a No Smoking or Vaping Policy.

We respectfully ask that mobile phones are not used in the school building by parents and visitors. This is to safeguard all the children in school.