

**AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

AVENUE ROAD, NORWICH, NORFOLK, NR2

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Email: [office@avenuejunior.org](mailto:office@avenuejunior.org)[www.avenuejuniorschool.org](http://www.avenuejuniorschool.org)**February 2023 Newsletter**

The end of the first half term is rapidly approaching and the first signs of spring are upon us. It's been a busy half term with much to look forward to for the rest of the year. Our key focus for the next half term will be a continued focus on improving writing, in particular, handwriting and also looking forward to welcoming you into school again.

**Allergies—PLEASE READ THIS SECTION IN FULL!**

In the UK, 40% of children have been diagnosed with an allergy. For some people, allergies can trigger relatively minor reactions such as itching. However, for others, including some of our children, they can suffer from an anaphylaxis which can be fatal.

Whilst there are many children in school with a variety of allergies, we have pupils who are at risk of anaphylaxis to peanuts, nuts and kiwi. Contact with these allergens could be life threatening for these pupils. This is why we are a peanut, nut and kiwi free school. These items must never be brought into school to ensure pupil safety.

Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, don't happen just via direct contact – for example, eating or drinking. Reactions can also be triggered by indirect or secondary contact. For example, if a child were to open a kiwi or eat some nuts and then touch a door handle which was then touched by an allergy sufferer, this could lead to an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis happens when the immune system identifies and allergen as a threat. In some cases, this can lead to, amongst other things, the restriction and/or collapse of the airways (a child's throat may close up) which can be fatal.

Imagine being a child with such an allergy. I have to say, our children always amaze me with their resilience and, for the most part, children with allergies – even severe allergies – carry on as normal. However, we have had instances where people have forgotten the 'no nuts or kiwi' policy and brought these items into school. This can be scary and dangerous for children with allergies. This is especially the case for those of our pupils who may have received hospital treatment for anaphylaxis in the past.

All children have had an assembly about allergies to raise awareness and well-trained staff are in school to provide an appropriate first aid response should this be necessary. However, I wanted to write to you in more detail about this issue to raise the profile of the policy that nuts and kiwis must not be brought into school. I have written this in conjunction with some of our parents of allergy sufferers. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Parent/Carer Survey**

Thank you to those of you who completed the parent/carers survey last term. There were many positives to take from this.

The vast majority of you told us that your children were happy at school and that they feel safe. Another strength was that we responded to your concerns properly and that your children do well at Avenues.

The main things that came out of the survey for us to work on are making sure that parents and carers are aware of how we communicate what children will be learning over the year. We also need to better inform you about your children's academic achievement at school. Another area for us to consider is how to ensure that parents and carers understand what bullying is, and what it is not. We also need to ensure that children have this understanding. There is a section further on in this newsletter which talks about our work relating to anti-bullying.

### **Internet Safety**

We teach the children about how to stay safe online throughout the curriculum for RSHE but we also focus on this issue on Safer Internet Day. This year this was on Tuesday 7th February. The focus this year was on **'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online.'** This is about ensuring that children talk about their online life and that they are able to identify any concerns or worries that they might have. We have also spoken to the children about cyberbullying which is any bullying which happens over the internet which could be via tablet, computer, games console, phone etc. Where you feel your child has been bullied online, please do raise it with school as we will support any children involved and can also support parents and carers to help guide their children's online experiences too.

### **Class Assemblies**

We have really enjoyed welcoming back parents and carers into school for the children's class assemblies. So far, we have been entertained by the children who have been learning about Recycling, The Romans and Rainforests. It's been lovely to see the children acting, singing and generally showing how brilliant they can be. We look forward to you joining us if you can when your child's assemblies are scheduled. Your child's teacher will keep you updated about the date of the assembly but these are also on the school's calendar on our website <http://www.avenuejuniorschool.org/>.

### **Anti-Bullying**

Following the parent/carer survey, it became clear that we should work with families to develop a shared understanding of what bullying is and how we manage instances of bullying at school. The school has a definition of bullying in its Anti-Bullying policy which is: **Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour, which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by one person or a group of people towards another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online. The STOP acronym can be useful when defining bullying – Several Times On Purpose.**

When considering whether your child has been bullied, consider—was it deliberate? Has it happened before? Is there an imbalance of power? If the answer to these questions is 'yes' then you should contact the school to say that you believe that your child has been bullied.

When we are aware that bullying may have happened, we will investigate what has happened, make sure parents/carers of both the victim and the children who have bullied are made aware and kept up to date and we will support all of the children involved. The wishes of the target of the bullying will always be considered when taking any action. Bullying falls under Stage 4 of our Behaviour Policy with 'Persistent Bullying' falling under stage 5. This means that a senior leader will always be in-

### **School Council and Eco-Council**

The school's council have recently met to discuss the school's anti bullying policy and to create a more child friendly version of the document. After agreeing on a definition for bullying, they were tasked with creating some anti-bullying poems which could feature within the document—look out for some of these amazing poems!

Over the next half term or 2 we are also investing some money into our outdoor spaces to improve the school environment and to create spaces and opportunities that may not have previously existed for the children. The school council were involved in some of the decision process for these improvements and overwhelmingly voted for the removal of the old wooden stage on the bottom playground with permanent outdoor gym equipment being installed in its place!

Our Eco-council continue to be fantastic advocates for environmental protection, recycling and saving energy. In the Spring and Summer terms they'll be heavily involved in 'greenifying' some of our outdoor spaces and turning our school into a thriving urban habitat for wildlife.

### **Sporting Update!**

#### **Football**

After a phenomenal Autumn Season for the Year 5, Year 6 and Girls Team, the children are ready and raring to go for the new Spring Season. Training has restarted and matches will begin very soon! We will keep you up to date with the results throughout the season

#### **Running**

Running club has resumed after the winter break. The team currently sits in 4th place with a number of individual runners in the top 20! There is a fantastic spirit within the club and the adults who run it have commented on how amazingly the children represent the school!

#### **Korfball**

Korfball training has continued with great enthusiasm throughout the winter. With the evenings becoming lighter, the children are looking forward to some more game opportunities. We also have the Spring and Summer Tournaments to look forward to!

### **Parking**

The cold weather and dark morning/evenings has brought with it a sharp rise in the number of families using cars at pick up and drop off times. With a number of other schools in the local area also beginning/ending their day at a similar time, this has meant the roads around school have been incredibly busy and not always as safe as we'd like for our pupils.

We strongly encourage all families, where possible, to walk or cycle to and from school. This sends a great message about active/healthy lifestyles but also helps to make the roads just a little bit safer for our families and children. Of course we understand that walking to school is not always possible and in these circumstance we ask that you park a little way from school and walk in the remainder of the journey.

Stopping or parking on the zig-zag lines outside the school gates and office is not allowed at any time—this is to protect our children at key entrance and exit points to the building. Likewise, parents/carers should not park on double yellow lines around the school.

Please help us in ensuring pick up and drop off times are as safe as possible for our children and the people in our community.

### **Mid-Year Achievement Updates**

In order to try to better inform you about how your child is learning at school and to what level they are learning, we are going to be writing mid-year short assessment reports and holding consultation meetings where these can be discussed. The mid-year achievement updates will be sent home later in the term and will comment on the whether your child is on track to meet the end of year expectations or not. For Year 6 pupils, the reports will be shared with you during the consultation meetings. Of course, you will need more context or this information and so the consultation meetings you will have with your child's teacher can be used to discuss what's going well and what support, in and outside of school, will help your child to continue to make good progress.



## Attendance and Late Arrivals

We have seen from our own assessment information as well as from national data that children who have good attendance at school make greater progress and achieve more highly than those children who do not. The school gates are open from 8.30—8.50, however school officially begins at 8.45. Anytime after this is considered 'late' and children will need to sign in through the main school office.

If children are late, it can lead them feeling unsettled and they miss essential learning activities which are hard to catch up. Please do let us know

if you are experiencing any difficulties in getting your children to school so that we can help support in this process. Lauren Gislam, our Parent Support Advisor, is a great source of support for families wanting some help to improve attendance. Please contact her via the office telephone or email her directly at [psa@avenuejunior.org](mailto:psa@avenuejunior.org).

## Anti Racism

We have continued on our journey to promote anti-racism. A group from the working party of parents and carers have visited school with some of our Year 6 pupils to tour the school site, looking at how inclusive it is. They found that is much to be proud of but suggestions were also made to make sure that everyone's culture and heritage is included and celebrated.

Our next step will be to review and finalise our policy around how we respond to prejudiced based incidents.

## Is your child entitled to free school meals?

If you receive one of the following then your child may be eligible: Universal Credit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, The guaranteed element of Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit run-on or Child Tax Credit

Please do apply if you are eligible. As well as your child receiving free school meals, the school receives additional funding for each pupil identified. Further information can be found here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/school-meals-and-milk>

If your child is eligible for free school meals then you may also be able to access a fully-funded place at the school's Before School Breakfast Club run by Set Your Sights. Places are limited but get in touch if you think this would be helpful for your child. More information here: <http://www.avenuejunior.school.org/wrap-around-care/>

Contact Mr Rose-Brown via the office to request a place.

## Outdoor Improvements

Mr Lowe has been thinking carefully about how to get the most from our outdoor spaces and over the next few months we've got a number of significant changes scheduled to take place. Within the trim trail area, we are installing 7 large raised beds which are due to be planted with over 250 individual plants. The planting plan has been designed by Robin Templar Williams (an award winning landscape design consultant) to act as a sensory space for our children. Many of the plants are highly scented, with a succession of flowers and leaf colours to be expected throughout the year. Lots of the plants are also fantastic for our pollinating insects and therefore we hope that this creates something of an urban habitat for our local wildlife. We also have a number of perennials and evergreen shrubs going in across some of our other playground spaces. You may well have noticed the 15 tonnes of soil in the trim trail area waiting for our planting extravaganza to begin!

Within the trim trail area we will also be installing a covered shelter with fixed seating. This will act as a perfect outdoor learning space for whole classes or some of our smaller groups. Additionally, it will be a great space for parents/carers and children to sit whilst using the Sanctuary Library.

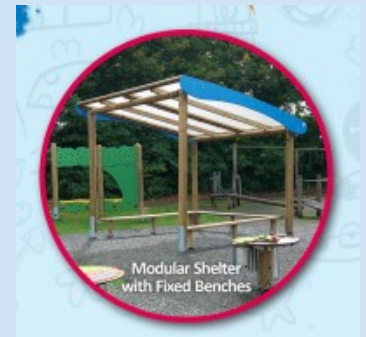


On the lower/MUGA playground we will be removing the old wooden stage. Children in our School Council stated that they 'never really played with it' and that during the winter time it was 'too slippery to use'. In its place, we will be installing a variety of permanent outdoor gym equipment that the children will be able to use a break and lunch times. The members of the School Council were very excited about this. This equipment is due to be installed shortly after the half term break!



In our lower garden area, we will be removing the old vegetable planters (unfortunately the wood has become rotten and unsafe) and replacing these with 5 new ones made from recycled plastic. These have a life span in excess of 35 years and should provide many children with the opportunity to get involved in gardening projects. We used to have an amazing lunchtime and afterschool club whereby children tended various plants and vegetables and it would be fantastic for children to have this opportunity again!

Lastly, we have some weatherproof games tables (chess, snakes and ladders etc) being installed in the lower garden area too. The creation of calm, quiet spaces at lunch times is something that our Diversity, Inclusion, Campaigns and Equalities (DICE) group have been pushing for and hopefully this area, combined with the new shelter in the trim trail, should provide some great spaces for children to relax and talk to friends.





### **Things to Look forward to for the rest of the Spring Term**

There is lots to look forward to over the rest of the term. Please see below for upcoming dates of events.

#### **February**

- Year 4 trip to Norwich Castle
- Waterstones visit (4G and 4H) - Friday 24th February
- Waterstones visit (6R, 6U, 3R, 3LR) - Monday 27th February. Year 6 in the morning and Year 3 in the afternoon.
- Waterstones visit (6A, 6C, 3MRB, 3BT) - Tuesday 28th February. Year 6 in the morning and Year 3 in the afternoon.

#### **March**

- World Book Day—Thursday 2nd March—Children to dress up as their favourite book character
- Waterstones visit (5MP, 5B, 4HK, 4P) - Friday 3rd March . Year 5 in the morning and Year 4 in the afternoon.
- Waterstones visit (5T and 5G) - Monday 6th March
- Year 3 trip to the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (7th and 14th March—to be confirmed)
- Music Festival at St Andrew's Hall 13th—24th March. 14th March and 22nd March: Year 6 consultation meetings
- 27th March and 30th March: Year 3, 4 and 5 consultation meetings
- Saturday 25th March 12-2pm for a table top sale with jumble and craft stalls
- Year 6 Residential to Norfolk Lakes—Wednesday 29th—Friday 31st March

