

NEWSLINE

North Primary School and Nursery

A Town Centre School with a Strong Community Ethos

September 2016
Issue 3



Promoting a Love of Learning

What is the difference between home learning and homework? Homework is set by the teacher, home learning is an activity that the child does outside of school which has educational value. Home Learning can be initiated by the child, or the parent. Children can do it by themselves or with adults. We want your children to do both. Better than that, we want your children to **want** to do both.

Last term we rewrote our Home Learning Policy. To help with this task the school council conducted a survey of all the Year 2 - Year 6 pupils. There were some interesting results. For example, some children like it when an adult helps, others prefer to do it on their own. Half the children said they like homework. These are some of the things the children said about why they like homework. "It helps me explain what I am doing in school to my parents." "It helps work get stuck in my head." "It is calming." 63% said homework is easier than schoolwork. Some children said they found homework hard because they forgot how they were taught something. The results are helping teachers set even better tasks. *Tapestry* in Nursery and Reception and weekly newsletters from year 1- 6 are used to share with you what the children are doing which can help you to help your children at home: to set aside time and space to do it, and to know what they are doing so that you can help them. An important aspect of homework is developing children's self-discipline and organisation skills. In the survey when asked, "Are you a do it at the last minute kind of person?" 47% said "Yes!"

Of course the most powerful way for parents to help their children is talk and read with them. Then talk and read. And talk and read some more. The average 4 year old has a vocabulary of about 1000 words. There is a massive variance between children's vocabulary when they start nursery and school. Some have more than a 1000 words. Many have significantly fewer. Sharing books - talking about the pictures, the story lines and the vocabulary - from early infancy all the way through primary makes a huge difference. The more you talk with your children the more you can help them with their language development.

In the survey 53% of the children said they read alone every day. 10% read with their parents every day. 19% said they read with their parents 3 times a week. 42% of the children said they belong to Colchester Library. We want these figures to be higher.

This term we want your help in continuing to push a love of reading. Our annual Book Week is fast approaching. There will be many activities during the week to boost children's reading skills, comprehension and love of reading and language. If you want to buy books, the Book Fair will be here the week before. But you don't need to spend money to read good books. Red Lion Library is wonderful. Thousands of free books to choose from. Take a shopping break and sit in there for half an hour. Borrow books for free. What is not to like? Let's see if we can double membership this term from 42% to 84%.

During the Book Week we are having a bring your favourite book to school day and grandparents have been invited to that. Please make sure grandparents have received their invitations.

Every year we have a sponsored event. In the past it has been held early in the summer term. We decided that there are a lot of school fundraising events at that time so we are moving it the autumn term This year we will give it a reading focus. Sponsor sheets will be sent home soon.

Don't forget Skoolbo, which gives children the chance to boost their technical reading skills (and maths skills too). School Councillors have started researching and writing a *Children's Guide to Home Learning*.

The Home Learning Policy and the School Council Homework Survey can be found on the school website Parents Page.

Parking on a pavement is a criminal offence. Some parents continue to do this in Victoria Chase. This selfish action is causing children to have to walk on the road. Do you want to be the cause of an accident. Traffic Wardens have been asked to patrol our school more frequently at the start and end of every day.



Last year was our third year of Free For All and it was another spectacular success. Over the year the children's learning experiences were enriched in so many ways. Together, through a range of exciting and innovative projects, we generated enough income to enable that to happen this year too. The NSA are an important part of that success. **On Tuesday 4th October the NSA will be holding their annual general meeting.** This will give you an opportunity to learn more about how the NSA works and what its plans are for this coming year. They are always looking for fresh blood and it is a great way to make friends and do good at the same time. Please come.

Applying for Secondary School

Year 6 Parents have to submit their children's secondary school applications by the end of October. Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. Please make sure you apply by the deadline date.

To help parents decide on which schools to apply for, local secondary schools will be hosting meetings and tours in the next few weeks. Please look at websites or enquire with schools you are interested in to check dates of events they are holding. Our neighbouring secondary, St. Helena is visiting here on Monday 19th September at 2.15. This roadshow event is open to parents of Year 5 and Year 6 children.

Open Lessons, Stay and Learn

Tuesday 8th November	Year 1	9.10am
Tuesday 8th November	Reception - Squirrels	9.10am
Wednesday 9th November	Year 6	2.00pm
Wednesday 9th November	Reception - Badgers	9.10am
Thursday 10th November	Year 2	9.10am
Friday 11th November	Reception - Hedgehogs	9.10am
Tuesday 15th November	Year 3	9.10am
Wednesday 16th November	Year 5	2.00pm
Thursday 17th November	Year 4	9.10am

DATES FOR TERM

Tuesday 4th October	NSA Annual General Meeting	7.00pm
Friday 7th October	Book Fair Arrives	
Monday 17th October	Invite your Grandparent to School Afternoon	2.00pm
Friday 21st October	Last day of half term	
Tues 1st November	Return to school	
Thursday 24th November	Parent Consultation Evening	
Thursday 1st December	Year 3 Christmas Play	Afternoon
Friday 2nd December	Christmas Bazaar	6.00pm
Tuesday 6th December	Year 4 Christmas Play	Afternoon
Friday 9th December	Year 1 and 2 Christmas Play	Morning and afternoon
Tuesday 13th December	Reception Christmas Play	
Tuesday 20th December	Year 5 and 6 Carol Concert	
Wednesday 21st December	Last day of term	
Thurs 5th January 2017	First day of Spring Term	
Thursday 9th February	Last day of half term	
Mon 20th February	Return to school	
Friday 31st March	Last day of Spring Term	
Tuesday 18th April	First day of Summer Term	