



# Woodsetts Primary School

[www.woodsettsprimary.co.uk](http://www.woodsettsprimary.co.uk)

February 2015

*"To inspire and innovate creative learners to be ambitious in all the challenges set before them".*

## Welcome Back

Welcome back to another action packed term. You will see that we have altered the layout of the newsletter for your convenience and welcome any feedback. The front page is a short information page, the back page is a page for the fridge as it includes dates and events in school. In between are question and answer reports from the monthly Parental Forum, Tea and Chat meetings with Mrs Walker and Pupil Voice with senior leaders and children. We hope these pages will further support communication between home and school.

As always a massive thank you to the PTA for organising the Valentines Disco. The event was a great success and raised £366.41. The School also supported the British Heart Foundation campaign with Wear Red Day and raised £147. The School Council meet with the PTA each term to discuss how to spend the money raised, and they share the outcomes of their decisions on the school webpage.

## Reading at home

A great big thank you to you all for reading at home with your child (singing songs and rhymes in EYFS). Every class has a Reading Race Track which is updated every Friday. The parental support has been phenomenal. Over 85% of you support your child to read at least three times a week (via home school diary). This has led to children doing exceptionally well in their whole school reading. We are really proud - together we can educate your children to achieve great things.

## Music

Yet another successful year was enjoyed at Sheffield arena by the School Choir at the Young Voice Event. Thank you to the staff and parents who supported the children to attend this memorable event.

The school has a piano for sale. If anyone is interested, please contact the school office. It costs £300 and must be collected.

## PE News

Rotherham United Community Sports Trust will be running a new after school football club this half term for children in KS2. This will run for 5 weeks, on Mondays (3.30pm – 4.30pm).

The After School Clubs run by Mr Steadman will resume next week for KS1(Y1 &2) and FS. This half term will focus on gymnastics. If interested, please complete the reply slip or see Mr Steadman.

Congratulations to those children in Years 5 and 6 who took part in an Athletics Competition at Dinnington Comprehensive earlier this week— both the girls and boys teams came second in the competition, bringing two fabulous trophies back to school.

## Website / ICT News

We are now on Twitter—should you wish to receive tweets please sign up via our home page.

Remember, all your child's homework is set weekly via their class page. The log-in numbers can be found in the front of your child's home school diary. All e-homework is Ipad/tablet friendly, including the Bug Club reading scheme. (Please read how to access it via the Literacy page.) E-homework helps save the environment by eliminating printing and photocopying.

Mr France our ICT consultant is available every Wednesday after school (3.30-4.30pm) should any parent want support with their child's ICT work. Parents may also use the school computers during this time to support their child in completing their homework if you wish.

'Reach for the Stars'.

## Parental Voice

Throughout the year Mrs Walker has enjoyed a "Tea and Chat" every alternative Friday with a randomly selected group of parents from each year group. She has enjoyed the time spent sharing ideas. As leader of the school, Mrs Walker is relentless in securing successful outcomes for all our children. The paradox is that, whilst we are secure with our school systems, routines and values, we know as a team that we will always seek to improve. We are an outward facing school and seize these vital conversations to change and improve, and ultimately to make a difference to the children and community we serve. Miss Plant has also led a monthly Parent Forum to facilitate parents to work in partnership with the school and communicate ideas, worries and problems. Mrs Walker has decided to share the most common threads of those parental conversations via the newsletter in order to keep the communication transparent between everyone.

## Question and Answers

Q—Parents would like the class sets (colour groups) to be explained and re-evaluated.

A—We totally agree. Teachers are trained to pitch work to meet the needs of their class. It would be detrimental to teach the class as one (30 children all learn in different styles and rates). Teachers generally plan for three levels within each lesson. Classes will generally be taught in a three way split. The new terminology is - "*Exceeding age related expectations*", "*Working at age related expectations*" and "*Working below age related expectations*". You will see this terminology used within your child's termly progress report. The plan is to have three colours -gold, green and purple. However some staff might choose to call these groups themed topic names and the colours won't necessarily be obvious to children and parents. We hope you support this idea.

Q—We like the "Newday" reward and sanction system, but feel that the 'rules' for red cards are too 'strict' for children in the early years.

A—We agree that within the early years, children are still learning the boundaries of right and wrong. We are happy to work with parents to review the wording of the policy within our home school diary if the majority of parents would welcome a review. The school invites everyone's views by the end of the term via email—or attendance at the monthly Parent Forum. Once the general view has been attained, a working party with governor attendance can be drawn together to review the policy in the best interests of all its stakeholders. The good news is that many parents support the positive green and gold cards and see the system as a good way to celebrate success within learning for all the children who try hard each and every day.

Q—Why can't children have water bottles?

A—Children from EYFS to Y6 CAN have water bottles—but only pure water should be in them. Some children have previously brought fizzy pop or diluted squash in their bottle. We are a Healthy School and therefore have a rule that only pure water can be drunk by children at school. Government policy suggests that too much sugar in our diets is not good for our health or dental hygiene. Pure water is proven to stimulate and revitalise, avoids dehydration and has a positive impact upon learning. All water bottles should be labelled with your child's name and class. It is their responsibility to bring it home daily to be washed and refilled ready for the next day. Teachers encourage drinks during breaks, lunchtime, PE and following these breaks. Whilst drinks are always available within class (children can have a drink when they want) children are generally encouraged to have a drink when the teacher does too, supporting good working habits and avoiding spills onto their work. Some children also 'suck' on them, not for a drink, but as a habit which you will appreciate can be detrimental to everyone's learning.

Q—My child achieves a lot outside of school and I would like that shared within school.

A—The school supports this and welcomes children to bring photographs of themselves with trophies etc. into school. These will be displayed on our 'wall of fame' display in the hall. Miss Richardson leads gifted and talented children within school.

Q—We loved the Foundation Stage live nativity at Chatsworth and ask school make it an annual event. It would be lovely to see children dressed up in traditional nativity scene outfits and tell the Christmas story as it was told in the bible. e.g. Angels, shepherds, stars etc.

A—School totally supports this idea.

Q—Can the doors be opened and closed on time, and can the children be let out on time too?

A—The school bell is rung at 8.40am to alert all children to stand on their number square, on their class line in the school yard. During this time parents can have a quick conversation with teachers. At 8.45am a second bell rings for the teachers to bring the children in. The teacher and teaching assistant will bring the class into school and lock the classroom door behind them at 8.50 for safeguarding reasons. The number square in the school yard is linked to your child's number on the register, and also provides a quick and accurate safety check if the building has to be evacuated quickly.

Q—We want to see and hear more about the wider curriculum during parents evening and other events.

A—You will appreciate that teachers haven't got lots of time to speak about the full curriculum during parents evening. During this time you are welcome to enjoy the opportunity to look at your child's work within the classroom. Mr. France is also available in the ICT suite should you have any ICT queries. The school council are also on hand to share conversations about the curriculum and other related topics. We also invite colleagues from Dinnington Comprehensive School should anyone like to discuss transition issues. Parents are invited into the classroom Friday mornings during assembly time to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher should they wish. After Easter, the class assemblies will begin, which showcase work done across the wider curriculum. We are also planning events after SATs for parents to come into school and support their child in an art/design and technology/music etc. project.

Q—The federation, some parents think that it isn't a good thing, particularly at Woodsetts.

A—The local authority encouraged the governing body to allow the headteacher to work as an Executive Headteacher across the two schools. NB:-It is worth noting that OFSTED will not award outstanding to a school who is not supporting another school to succeed.

I would agree that initially (2012-13) Woodsetts did suffer through the lack of senior staff being properly secured in place to deal with the daily issues faced by a headteacher (in the absence of the headteacher). The rapid staff turn over was accelerated by, the then, newly appointed Head of School leaving to go on maternity leave. This then created an unforeseen set of staff circumstances which resulted in a further domino effect. As a result of the rapid promotion of some staff, coupled with several staff leaving for personal reasons, the years, 2012-14 unfortunately were perceived to be in a period of restlessness. However, the school has now formally federated. It has had time to restructure and create capacity for its staffing team to be able to do their job more efficiently by creating more hands to do the work. The operational management of the schools is much more secure. Shared funding for purchasing resources actually supports the school's budget (buying in bulk is cheaper) this creates more funding for your children within each school—which can only be a good thing! Staff across both schools work together in partnership planning, trips, marking books and monitoring standards of pupil outcomes, again this is a strength, it supports whole school standards and expectations and staff well-being. It also supports the school when faced with difficult issues such as staff absence—it helps create continuity for the children within the planning cycle. It is difficult to explain how one headteacher can be a head at both schools, but with a secure structure below the strategic Executive Head (the Executive Deputy Head, Executive Business Manager and Assistant Head at each school) it does work. Mrs. Reynolds at Anston Brook and Miss Matthews at Woodsetts are in charge of the daily operation of the school in the absence of the executive team. Mrs. Ousley is Executive Business Manager, she is part of the senior team and is responsible for whole school HR, budget and the line management of the non teaching team. Working at both schools are two admin office teams, Miss Fenton and Mrs. Conlon at Woodsetts and Miss Fenton and Mrs. Richardson at Brook. They support with safeguarding, attendance and punctuality, school policy, prospectus and transition/admission procedures as well as updating the website. Savings on the executive salaries support funding two pastoral care officers. Mrs. Willey and Mrs. Bacon support children, families and whole school safeguarding procedures. So without the funding generated from shared roles and Pupil Premium, other roles wouldn't exist and these roles would go back to the Headteacher and stretch resources further thus not strategically developing and managing the school. Collaboration is now key to our future success. Staff training through internal professional development really does support your child's teacher to improve at a rapid rate compared with the old method of one teacher in one year group in one school, working hard but in isolation of what other teachers were doing to improve their practice -thus improving whole school performance. I hope this supports your thoughts, who to ask for, if you need support, or advise within the team.

Q—I want to work/volunteer in my child's class.

A—Parental support is warmly welcomed, we value the work we can do together to secure high educational standards for ALL children. Children benefit from 1:1 support and the more people supporting the better. However, we have had issues previously when a parent caused issues through supporting within their own child's class. Parents were told that their children were not doing x, y... books were looked at and confidential issues discussed outside of the school. You will appreciate that schools are busy places, we all are trying hard to do the best we can for all the children. We need everyone to understand that it is a privilege to work with children and that any controversial issues about behaviour and standards should be between school and individual parents. Trust is a big word, there is a very fine line between support and interference in other people's business. However, we have reviewed the policy and listened to parental voice. We have an idea.... We would warmly welcome parents on a Friday afternoon (3.15-3.30 pm) to help their child swap their reading book. Any parent wanting to support in their child's class is more than welcome by mutual agreement with the class teacher following an induction, which will include reading certain school policies and signing a confidentiality agreement in line with current practices. All parents supporting in school on a 1:1 basis need a DBS check (police check) further information can be received via the office.

Q—I don't understand the school reading system, my iPad won't log on to the bug club home school reading system

A—Your child is given e-books, in their e-book bag using the schools reading scheme—bug club. There are also lots of reading phonic games on the bug club scheme that will support your child's learning. AF means 'assessment focus'. The AF's can be found in the front of your child's home school diary, these will help you support your child with the reading skills they need.

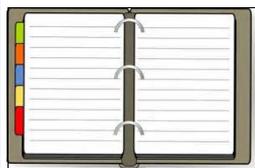
Q—We want more after school clubs and are willing to pay for these activities.

A—Teachers have a lot of paperwork to complete daily within their roles and often cannot commit to running after school clubs. We are fortunate to have Mr. Steadman as our PE leader, due to Sports Premium funding. Within their roles they teach daily lunch time activities and after school sports clubs. Rotherham United are now running a football club. Mrs. Dickinson sources and runs educational clubs as well as communicating this (via the website). Feedback was that FS children would like to attend ASCs. Many external providers will not support children under 5 however Miss Plant is offering to support a FS craft club (parental involvement required). Mrs. Dickinson is researching for a wider breadth of clubs in the new term. Many of our TA staff have a vast repertoire of talents and skills. I am hopeful that some of them would be willing to lead extra provision if they are guaranteed payment. The school also works in partnership with Dinnington Comprehensive Schools Sixth Form. I am aware that many upper sixth form students (eighteen year olds), might be interested in running clubs e.g.—chess, art and cookery, we also have a link with Dinnington College. I will ask Mrs. Dickinson to source lecturers in woodwork, car mechanics, wall building etc. to see if they would be willing to run a club. Parents will need to support full payment for a term's worth of clubs if we secure external staff. As always, if you or your family have a skill that you can share and you are committed to running a block of clubs on the same night weekly, then please call the office with information on the charge you would require for an hour session. All clubs must finish at 4.30 promptly to allow for clear safeguarding procedures and for the school to be cleaned. We would like to make a football changing room outside, if any parent is good with woodwork skills and would like to help us this would be most useful. The idea - to save the cleaners having to clean up so much mud following outdoor sports events!

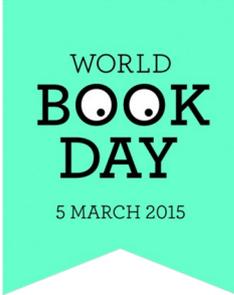
### **Class charts and target boards**

Charts in every class are promoted as a tool to excel against oneself. We set children the challenge 'can you beat your last score?' We support them to achieve well and nurture them to succeed if they find a skill difficult. Again parental support to teach the learning of weekly spellings, multiplication tables and general home learning activities is vital for individual pupil success. We do appreciate parental views that on occasion sharing 'scores' can be seen as a negative experience for some children and therefore propose that the teachers perhaps put the weekly spelling and timetables scores on the back of their stockroom door for those children who are sensitive about their scores.

## Diary Dates



- 4th March** Parent Forum—Kids Club @ 2.30pm. Drop in to meet Miss Plant and discuss any ideas or concerns.
- 5th March** World Book Day—Children dress up as their favourite book character. Bring journal to school.  
Library Bus—year 4 11.15-12pm



- 12th March** Library Bus—year 5 11.15-12pm
- 13th March** Red Nose Day theme for 2015 'Make your face funny for money' & cake sale (cake/bun donations welcome)  
Mother's Day (assembly at 2.15 pm welcomes all Mummies, Grandmothers, Aunties to join us in the hall).



- 16th March** Year 6 revision starts today, for 6 weeks.
- 18th March** Yr 2 SATs parent briefing 4.30-5.30  
Yr 6 SATs parent briefing 5.30-6.30
- 19th March** Library Bus—year 6 11.15-12pm
- 20th March** UN International day of Happiness
- 26th March** Library Bus—year 1 11.15-12pm
- 27th March** Non uniform day (suggested family donation of £1) - Easter Bonnet parade, children only.  
Easter Egg Hunt for children only during the school day, organised by the PTA
- 15th April** Parent Forum—Kids Club @ 2.30pm Drop in to meet Miss Plant and discuss any ideas or concerns.
- 29th April** Yr 1 Phonics screening parents' evening, 4.30—5.00 pm.

**After School Clubs**

- Monday's 23rd February—23rd March** Rotherham United Community Trust—Football for KS2
- Wednesday's 4th March—25th March** Gymnastics with Mr. Steadman & Miss Baker for FS2
- Thursday's 5th March—26th March** Gymnastics with Mr. Steadman for KS1  
Craft Club with Miss Plant for FS (parental support required)

## Class Trips this Half term

- Year 2, NHS**—Tuesday, 3rd March—Children at Anston Brook Primary to learn about the NHS—(see detailed letter for more information)
- Year 5, Peace Museum**—Thursday, 12th March visit to Bradford—(see detailed letter for more information)
- FS1 & 2 Farm Visit**—Monday 16th March Cannon Hall Farm, Barnsley —(see detailed letter for more information)

**Last day of term is Friday 27th March—school closes at 3:30pm**  
**Half term Monday 30th March until Friday 10th April School opens Monday 13th April**