



ALEXANDER HOSEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Roots to grow, Wings to Fly'

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Newsletter 9th March 2015

Dear Parents / Carers

Staff update

We were sorry to see Mrs May, our General Assistant, leave us at the beginning of Term 3, due to personal circumstances. I am however, pleased to inform you that we have now recruited to this position and Victoria Chubb has now joined us. We welcome her to the staff of Alexander Hosea School.

Professional visit to Topaz class

Last week, Mrs Windmill and Ms Johns welcomed Elizabeth Jarman to their class. Elizabeth is a highly renowned educationalist, who focuses on the impact of learning spaces on children's learning. Mrs Windmill and Ms Johns shared their practice with her at a recent conference and she had asked to come and see our EYFS provision for herself. She was extremely impressed with all that she saw, especially with the children's ability to talk so confidently and articulately about their learning!

Be Healthy

School lunches

The total cost of school lunches for Term 4 is £51.80. Please remember that you are able to pay this using Agora – our new on-line payment system.

The South Gloucestershire Catering Service is currently reviewing the menus for school lunches – more information to follow. In the meantime, I hope parents are enjoying the opportunity to join their child for a school lunch.

Stay Safe

Safety at dropping off and picking up times

This is an on-going issue and one which was discussed at the last Parish Council meeting. Please:-

- be mindful of parking safely, avoiding the corners at the top and bottom of Honeybourne Way to ensure vision is good.

- keep clear the entrance to residents' driveways.
- use the drop off zone for dropping off only – drivers should not leave their car here.
- do not use the staff car park to enter the school premises.

To help with this issue, the school has once again approached The Buthay; they have very kindly agreed that parents can park their cars in the pub car park at the start and end of the school day, so that you and your child/ren can walk the last bit to school. This should help ease the congestion in the roads around school.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Buthay for their generosity in supporting the school. This is a great community link!

Internet Safety

As part of Internet Safety day, children undertook a range of activities to remind them about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Two community police officers came along to school to take a session with the Y5 and Y6 children, but were unfortunately called away just as they arrived. We are hoping to re-arrange this.

Enjoy and Achieve

National Curriculum and Assessment procedures 2014- 15

The new National Curriculum is being implemented in school this year for Years 1, 3, 4 and 5. Children in Y2 and Y6 are continuing to be taught the previous National Curriculum as their SATs will be based upon this.

With the new curriculum come increased expectations of the children across all age groups; these are especially in relation to English and Maths, where the learning is very challenging. The curriculum for these subjects is organised in year groups.

In addition, the Government has discontinued use of the old National Curriculum levels that were used to assess children, and have now allowed schools to choose their own assessment procedures. Teachers are working extremely hard with the children to help them meet the specified expected standards for their year group. These are called Age Related Expectations. We have adopted a new assessment system promoted by South Gloucestershire which identifies children as being assessed as either 'developing', 'secure', or 'exceeding' the age related expectation. Under the new curriculum, all schools are finding that children who were previously working above expectation are now just about meeting the 'secure' criteria and children who were working at the expected level or below, meet 'developing' criteria. Very few children are currently meeting the 'exceeding' criteria for their year group. As you will understand, this makes it difficult to make comparisons between the children's previous and current achievements and to compare results of schools locally and nationally. Hopefully this will be resolved over time.

There are no changes to the existing EYFS curriculum, which was changed three years ago.

Curriculum theme for Term 4

This term our school theme is 'Stories'. We launched the theme in various ways – upper Key Stage 2 classes received an invitation to a 'ball' in the hall, with various related follow-up activities. The bedtime stories were also a great success, with many children from each class

coming along in their pyjamas etc. - A big 'thank you' to PTA members who supported the event by providing biscuits and making the hot chocolate. Learning overviews for each class are available from the school's website.

World Book Day

Children shared their favourite books, authors and characters in class to celebrate World Book Day last Thursday.

Long term plans for Alexander Hosea School

All schools have a long term, strategic plan. Our strategic plan runs until the end of July this year, so we are busy identifying what we believe should be the school's priorities for the next five years. We need some help with this, especially as it is important that all members of the school community have the opportunity to share their views, so that these can be discussed and included where possible. The current national context will also have an important role to play in determining some of our goals and targets.

The staff have already started work on this and the Governors are meeting later this week to begin considering the long term plans for the school. It is vital that parents are also involved as key stakeholders. Parent Council suggested that it would be a good idea to run an informal coffee morning (or similar) in order to gather the views of parents. I have therefore scheduled Thursday 26th March at 9.10am (after drop off), in the Blue Room, for this purpose. I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

Cross country

This is an inter-schools event which children participate in annually during the winter months. I am very grateful to Mrs McAleese for training the children as part of her Cross Country Club and for arranging to get our children involved. Once again they have done extremely well this year with Maia Parmar coming 4th overall in the Y5/6 girl's competition and Luke Shrewsbury coming 6th overall in the boy's Y5/6 competition. Maia and Luke have both been chosen to represent Avon in a cross country competition in Cheltenham on 21st March. Henry Smith, Adam Shrewsbury and Luke Shrewsbury received medals for coming third overall as a team, which was a first for the Year 5s.

A special 'well done' to all of them!

Football matches

The football team has once again been busy playing matches against other local schools:- In a home match against St. Mary's, Yate on 5th March they drew 1-1. They won 4-1 against Elm Park and 8-2 against Coalpit Heath, therefore winning 2 and drawing one – a great achievement! Well done!

Science

This week we are having a Science week in school. The children will all be involved in a range of Science - based activities. This is being launched with a Science assembly led by Fizz Pop. There will be an opportunity for children to join an after school Science club following this.

Some of our more able scientists will be chosen to attend a Science session with children from other local schools (EYFS – Tuesday 24th March, KS1 and 2 – Wednesday 25th March).

Music

Thank you for ordering a copy of the upper KS2 Christmas performance. I hope you have enjoyed listening to this again!!

The Year 6 children are busy practising the songs which they will be performing at the Colston Hall with other South Gloucestershire Primary schools on 22nd March. This is a wonderful opportunity for them. I am very much looking forward to this.

Positive Contribution

Relationships and Sex Education / Personal, Social and Health Education evening for parents

Thank you to all parents who managed to join the staff and governors for the RSE evening held in school just before the end of term 3. Your evaluations show that you found this useful and we certainly value your contribution to our decision making processes. To ensure an even wider number of views, Mrs Windmill has sent out a RSE related survey, which we would appreciate you completing and returning to school by Friday 20th March. The outcomes will be used to inform our RSE policy review and practice. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Website

Thank you for completing the recent questionnaire about the school's website. We have already taken on board some of the comments made – please take a look! Websites are becoming increasingly important vehicles, not only for parents and prospective parents, but for Ofsted too. This means there will be more and more information available. We are also hoping to develop the class pages because naturally, this is the area you are most interested in, apart from useful information such as the calendar of events. Thank you to Mrs Johnson for producing and providing feedback from the questionnaire.

Parents' evenings – 24th and 25th March 2015

Please note the dates of the forthcoming parents' evenings. These provide an opportunity for you to find out about your child's progress and attainment so far this year. There will be sign-up sheets on the windows at the front of the school, or alternatively you can e-mail your request for date and time. I look forward to seeing you at these.

Red Nose day – Friday 13th March – non-uniform/funny head

We are having a 'dress down' and make your head funny day for a donation of £1, with a prize for the funniest head overall. I hope there will be lots of entries! You will already have received a letter about this.

The children are running a bric-a-brac sale in aid of Red Nose Day this Friday at 3.30pm in the Blue Room. There will be books, toys and games for sale, as well as general bric-a-brac, so please come along and support them.

Clothes For A Cause – proposed date, 20th April

Advance notice - The PTA is once again collecting for 'clothes for a cause'. If you are having a 'turn out' over Easter (or before), please remember this!

Economic Well-being

Part of developing children's economic well-being is to research best value. Some of the classes have been working on this, before purchasing items from the funds they raised from the Christmas Fair.

Holidays during term time

The school's attendance figures are monitored termly by Governors. We are pleased that the school is meeting its target more consistently, so thank you for your support with this. To ensure that children are benefiting from their education as fully as possible, this is just a reminder to refrain from taking your child out of school for holidays.

Diary dates for Term 4

March	Tuesday 3rd	Pearl parent/pupil lunch
	Friday 6 th	9.15am -9.40am KS1 SATS Meeting (Y2)
	Friday 13 th	Clubs finish Non-Uniform/funny head Parent Council meeting
	Friday 20th	Egg Theatre Topaz & Emerald, letter to follow
	Sunday 22 nd	Colston Hall Music Concert
	Tuesday 24 th	Parents' Evening 4.00pm – 7.30pm
	Wednesday 25th	Parents' Evening 4.00pm – 7.30pm
	Thursday 26 th	Coffee Morning 9.10 am
	Friday 27 th	End of Term 4

Next Parent Council meeting is on Friday 13th March. Please ensure your class rep. has any items for the agenda.

Yours sincerely

Ms. V. J. Quest
Headteacher