



Principal's Blog

20th September 2018

Welcome back to the new school year! It has been a very full-on start to the year with a number of updated and improved services and routines in the school.

New Classes

Children are all settled into their new classes and walks around the school by the Senior Leadership Team have shown that even our very youngest new starters are getting used to being in class, sharing and working with new friends and learning partners and enjoying the knowledge lessons in their day.

Behaviour

The year 5 and 6 are now all using their blue behaviour cards which help them manage their choices in the day. They are absolutely clear about what constitutes good behaviour – particularly for learning but also incorporates the start of day, break and lunch times and behaviour in corridors. I have seen great group work at monitoring their noise level around the school already. Walks around lessons show great focus and interest in their lessons.

Learning

TT Rock Stars continues – please encourage your child to log on to this at home and get themselves onto the leader board. We are continuing to celebrate effort in times tables learning – being able to recall these facts speeds up their understanding of calculations so much and helps children when learning new maths such as division because they are not trying to do too many things at once.

English writing – which we were pleased with at Elstow last year – is continuing to be taught by one of the two teachers in each year group from Y2 upwards. Pupils start by looking at a WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like) which shows the model which the children use to begin to form their own ideas for writing. They then follow a sequence where they begin to practice writing using enriched vocabulary and varied sentences (appropriate to their ages) until they reach a polished outcome. If you look in the classrooms you will see WAGOLL's on display.

Our Knowledge Curriculum maps will be available on the website with the organisers to help you support with the facts that children need to know to help in their lessons. We are always delighted when children bring in models they have made or fact sheets, or even can talk about museum or day trips out which have included finding out about some aspect of their learning in school. We love to celebrate their learning and will continue with certificates for great effort on Fridays.

Sports at Elstow

Y5 and Y6 Netball and Football

The new term and competitions have started with a bang. Both boys and girls have played two matches off site each and are thoroughly enjoying the chance to compete against local schools. This week we have had

success in both netball (4 – 1 win) and football (3-2 win). Although winning is great, we celebrate great teamwork more...!

Other competitions coming up are for Dodge Ball and KSI multi skills among other things. Most are in the school day and we will take children in our own mini buses.

SSC sport. The competitions for other year groups are all on the calendar and also in the Sports curriculum overview. Even though some external competitions are for a few pupils, we still have plenty of class games happening in the school PE lessons. We are continuing to benefit from Bedford Free School and Biddenham sports specialists to help us deliver really great lessons. I also see that some children are now buying the PE hoodie tops with the Elstow Logo. Of course you don't have to have one of these but please make sure the PE kit your child comes to school in, is plain blue black or grey and without logos or written coloured designs.

Lunches

The bands have now arrived and the news from the lunchtime staff is that today was much improved for serving food. We hope then that the early teething problems with pupils and receiving the correct food, are sorted out. Generally the feedback from the children is that they love the new look meals and for KS2 being served on plates too.

If you haven't managed to register and order meals online yet, even if your child has a free school meal, please do so as quickly as you can. If you need help please come to the office and we will sit with a school ipad to get you online and this done.



Energy Kidz

This club is growing in popularity. We walk through the club each day in the hall and the children love the games and activities. Today in the morning, they were using KNex straws to make a 'dress' for a friend. It was fun to watch!



Harvest

All our children are now learning poems and songs to celebrate this time of year. We have performances planned for Y1-6 on the 2nd October in the Big Hall. As usual we won't have tickets and parents will come into the hall through the Clubbercise Gate at the top of the car park.

Harvest Timings

Y3 & 4 9am Big Hall

Y5 & 6 9.20am Big Hall

Y1 & 2 2.45pm Big Hall

We will be donating tins and packets of food to our local foodbank as last year.

Early Years will have their autumn celebration on a separate day they will inform you of, and which will be in their newsletters and on the Early Years door.

Year 2 Parent Workshops

The change for our Year 2 pupils from being in Year 1 is a big jump. We want to support our Year 2 pupils and parents as much as possible and so the teaching team are putting on a series of workshops where we will explain the Year 2 curriculum, and focus on how to help your child at home with English and maths. The teachers will hand out packs of activities which you can do with your child to help them be successful and also give you a chance to be fully involved in their learning and progress.

The first workshop is on Thursday 4th October at 9am and 5.30pm.

The second is planned for 9am on the Thursday 11th October with an evening one to follow at a slightly later date.

And finally....



Brilliant piece of homework from Y3 today on the Gunpowder Plot. How amazing is this?