

# Weekly Newsletter

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Dear Parents and Carers,

For months the corridors and learning spaces in our academy have been silent save for the brief period of partial reopening and the hard work of the site staff and contractors to improve our school. I write having enjoyed one of the most precious experiences that the role of Principal has to offer which is the sound of children once again filling the school and the pleasure of welcoming smiling children back into their school community this week.

The first week of a new academic year, and for some beginning at a new school, is a prominent milestone in the life of every child. This year we are also navigating the additional challenges faced by the COVID-19 situation. Yet children arrived as bright-eyed and as eager as always. They arrived smartly presented, most keen and confident, some understandably apprehensive. It was an absolute joy to see them at last!

We thank parents and carers for your support and patience this week as we establish routines and systems for covid-safety which does mean the arrival and dismissal process takes longer. However, at the heart of this is the safety and social distancing of all. Parents are encouraged to drop off and collect children as quickly as possible when coming onto the site and not hold long conversation with staff at the gates or entrance but to communicate with the class teacher through phone call and the daily end of day email.

I encourage parents to email any questions or concerns directly to their child's class teacher or phone school and teachers will contact you before or after school teaching times. Children should wear their PE kit to school on PE days (which your class teacher will remind you to do through the daily email). Children can bring lunch boxes, drinks bottles, their coat and rucksack or book bag with them to school each day.

Children in secondary phase are very much encouraged to wear masks to travel to and from school, especially if they travel in taxis. They should bring a named ziplock plastic bag in which to place their mask once in school. School staff will be wearing masks or visors for arrival and dismissal times and in corridors. In class, teachers may be wearing visors so that children can see their facial expression which is so important for good communication and learning.

## What is a recovery curriculum ?

A think piece entitled 'A Recovery Curriculum: Loss and Life for our children and schools post pandemic' was published by children's mental health expert Professor Barry Carpenter. We have put the recovery curriculum in place to help our school community recover socially and emotionally, while sensibly addressing children's gaps in learning. To help a school recover a '*systematic, relationships-based approach to reigniting the flame of learning in each child*' uses 5 levers for recovery:

1. Rebuilding relationships;
2. Understanding the individual child and their community;
3. Knowing, acknowledging and addressing the gaps in learning through a transparent curriculum;
4. Metacognition – ensuring the children continue to develop their skills in learning;
5. A curriculum that engages and inspires, gives children the space to adjust and reduces any barriers to learning.



Mrs Laura Ives (Principal)

## What have we learning through our recovery curriculum in week one ?



Mouse class were engrossed in painting wooden toy pop up giraffes.



Dragonfly class enjoyed physical activity; bouncing outside on the trampolines once again.

As the new school year begins so do the new starters in our transition base. This week children started their journey at Medeshamstede as squirrel class, but quickly decided they would prefer to change their class name and be known as 'wolf class'! Children and staff have spent time getting to know each other in the transition base and look forward to spending the year together. We have been fascinated by the historical artefacts that William has collected to show us and by his knowledge of history. These artefacts have been quite a talking point for the class. Perhaps we will see some historical information in future newsletters? We also have some impressive artists in the class and children have enjoyed creating and designing for displays in their new classroom.



Caterpillars have enjoyed outdoor sensory play and are settling into their new class very well.



Magpies have been constructing, measuring, playing card games and enjoying learning some new traditional outdoor games.



This week Buzzard class have been chatting, making and carving with wood in the sunshine at Forest School. They have engaged well with their teachers and have produced some fantastic art-work also having fun in PE, playing tennis and football.



Building hammocks and toasting marshmallows over the camp fire at Forest School.



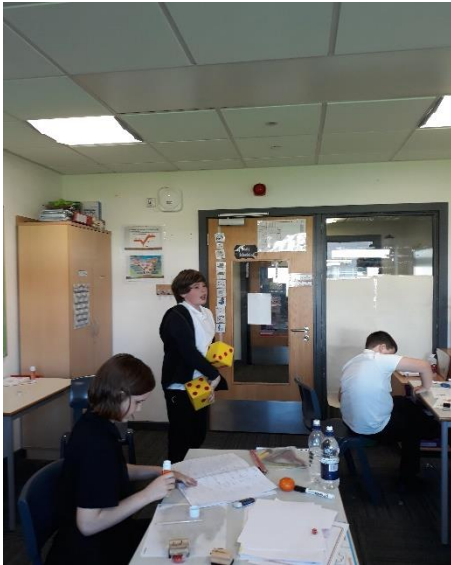
Robins have been making allotment vegetable salt dough models in our brand new extended cookery room.



Our youngest children and new starters in Busy bees have really impressed us this week. They are learning their routine quickly, making relationships and exploring their new environment with great interest and enthusiasm.



Woodpecker class have enjoyed a wonderful, multisensory week; exploring our new sensory outdoor walk, a classroom treasure hunt, outdoor sensory circuits, and a messy but fun attention autism session involving shaving foam!



Hawks love a challenge! They have been interacting and turn taking through maths in an activity to work out the probabilities of double dice rolls.

Finally, Eloise and her mum have been working hard on a health and fitness regime over the holidays, even making shepherd's pie from scratch. We were enormously proud to see the results of their hard work and commitment and Eloise is looking super fit and healthy – congratulations! You have inspired me to focus on my own fitness routine with a little more rigour!