



Diocese of Norwich  
Education and  
Academies Trust

## The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Neary

Web: [www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk](http://www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk)

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Parents,

After a really chilly week last week the sun seems to have arrived again and brought with it some welcome warmth. We are really beginning to see those signs of autumn and the children are enjoying exploring their changing environment. If you get the chance then try taking an autumn walk around the village and see how many signs of autumn you can see. You could even collect some different things and create a collage out of them.

Topics are well underway here. Oak Class are doing some amazing work on Clockwork. They have been looking at Steampunk and have created some fantastic artwork for book covers. I have been really impressed with the amount of detail in them. Whitebeam are learning all about Egypt and are creating some fact files while I type. They have amazing memories and have built up quite a lot of knowledge so feel free to quiz them about it. Rowan Class have managed incredibly well this week with different adults teaching them due to Miss Everett and Miss Bix being poorly. But they have carried on with their learning and Reception have learned new sounds. Everyone has looked at the different countries that make up the United Kingdom. We also sent some children from Years 4, 5 and 6 to Tag Rugby at TNHA. They represented us brilliantly and tried their absolute best.

Looking forward to next week, we have our class Reading Cafes. Come and join your child in class, have some refreshments and take part in some reading activities.

Rowan Class – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 9:00 – 10:00am - Phonics focus

Whitebeam Class – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Oak Class - Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October, 9:00 – 10:00am

Also, we have a football tournament at TNHA. We can only take a limited number of children so if your child is taking part then you will have been notified. For those children that didn't get to take part this time, there will be other opportunities throughout the year.

Please see the attached dates sheet for further dates.

### **Attendance since beginning of term**

Oak Class – 94.67%

Whitebeam Class – 96.58%

Rowan Class – 90.45%

**CONGRATULATIONS WHITEBEAM CLASS!!**

Whole School Attendance – 93.77%

We are working hard this year to ensure that we reach the best attendance we can. Strong attendance (96% and over) is so important for ensuring that your children learn and achieve well. 95% - considered satisfactory attendance by the Government and Ofsted as well as us - means not missing any more than ten school days over the whole year.

### **Donations Request to Develop Forest School Area**

We are going to be working on developing a forest school area for all children to enjoy. If you have any of the following items to spare, please could you contact the office or Miss George to arrange bringing them in to support with this? It would be very much appreciated! Items needed are:

Log stumps, planks of wood, metal ware for a mud kitchen, ropes, tarpaulin, milk crates, cable reels and other recyclable materials.

See below for an exciting competition related to Forest Schools!

### **Clubs**

We are looking to get some more after school clubs up and running with the aim of offering one every day of the week. If you, or someone you know, feel able to offer some time and help run a club then please come and see us. It could be anything – craft, outdoor learning, games – the options are endless!

### **Covid**

We had a few cases last week but we are really grateful that this does not seem to have spread any further. When we get a few cases, it is our policy to have the school thoroughly disinfected over a weekend in the form of fogging. This is on top of our usual thorough cleaning process.

### **Meet the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO)**

Come and join me for a chat on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October from 9am-10am in the school hall if you have any questions or queries relating to your child and how they are getting on at school. You do not need to have an appointment, just drop in and I will have the kettle on and biscuits ready. Your child does not already need to be identified as having SEN to come along. I look forward to seeing you there.

Emma Spaul, Federation SENDCo. Please contact me at Castle Acre on 01760 755305 if you have any queries.

### **News from our Classes**

#### **Rowan**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Skyla for devising her own 3 part repeating pattern using natural materials.

**Reader of the Week** – Oliver P for independently reading an autumnal poem.

**Writer of the Week** – Ivy for super grapheme formation in phonics.

**Shining Lights of the Week** - Tia for consistently showing a fantastic learning attitude throughout all of her learning.

Wow, what a week it has been in Rowan class! Rowan class has been impacted heavily by covid-19 this week, but Miss Watkins has been incredible, held the fort and ensured the children have had a successful week of learning despite the difficulties. In maths, the year 1 children have been looking at one more and one less and reception have been exploring repeating patterns using natural materials including sticks, conkers, pinecones and acorns. In English we have looked for adjectives in the Gruffalo story and even come up with some of our own! Some fantastic ideas were heard! In Geography we have been learning about where we live and who we live with, we had some excellent drawings from the Year 1s of their houses and who they live with and reception built some incredible houses from bricks. A fab week!

#### **Whitebeam**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Jasper for his work on missing numbers from a 100 square jigsaw.

**Reader of the Week** – Brody for good reading individually and when reading out in front of the class.

**Shining Light of the Week** – Carter for courage when trying food he has not tried before.

**Good Work Certificate** – Tyler for his skills in PE especially using a hula hoop!

**Pen License** - Holly

**Children's Worship** - Eleanor, Brody, Elliot and Finley H

In Whitebeam Class this week we have now completed our information texts about Egypt. The children are remembering lots of facts and love to point out where Egypt is on maps and in atlases! When we were thinking about Egyptian food we learnt about Baba Ganoush and some of the children said they would like to try it. Well their wish came true and many children showed courage by trying it along with pitta bread and hummus! In maths we have explored adding and subtracting 1s, 10s and 100s and looked for patterns along with fact families and related facts. The children have enjoyed our shared text *The Lotus Seed* and there has been lots of great discussion around this book. In outdoor learning they worked really well with partners to find clues hidden all over our field using a map that spelt out a sport. In ICT we have looked at sorting digital devices thinking about whether they have an input, process and output and in music we have played along to a tune with the recorders! Well done Whitebeam.

**Oak**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Alex for making an excellent contribution to group work and for persevering with some challenging Year 6 maths tasks.

**Reader of the Week** – Nataniel for reading regularly at home and always taking care to ensure his reading record is filled out and that he has a book with him in class that engages him.

**Writer of the Week** - Maddie for an informative piece of writing on climate zones and for supporting others with using a dictionary.

**Shining Light of the Week** – Mason D for demonstrating compassion and for being an excellent friend this week, often going the extra mile to support others.

In Oak class this week we have been working hard on our suspense narrative. We have been exploring using expanded noun phrases to open a story, aiming to create atmosphere and tension with a range of fantastic vocabulary. In maths we have continued our work with addition, working with a variety of numbers and using both mental strategies and the column method. We are continuing to explore Europe in our geography lessons and are looking forward to a themed day of learning next Friday to support this. On Thursday we saw some excellent progress during our swimming lesson at Dereham Leisure Centre - we were all really impressed with how confidently all children approached the exercises and how their stamina is continuing to grow. On Friday many of our children had the opportunity to visit TNHA for a Tag Rugby event. The children behaved beautifully and made us all very proud. They also won every match they played and shared the techniques they learned with us all on their return!

**Message from Executive Headteacher**  
**Parents/Carers' Survey**

This has now closed; we had over 57 responses, a 33% response rate (above average); it is great to get plenty of views. Overall analysis shows that 93% are happy and this being evenly spread across the three schools. We do analyse these as individual schools and below are the main areas to consider; we will be feeding back the actions taken as a result as they happen. Thank you to everyone who put their name, which means we can follow up if we need to better understand or discuss feedback. Clearly if someone has put that communication needs improving, but not put how or which aspect or their name, then we're really sorry but it is unlikely we are going to be able to follow up. We worked hard on communication over the course of last year and the good news is that 77% of respondents across Nar Valley feel that communication is good. Most of our families who responded at Castle Acre felt that communication was good; there were two who did not feel this was so, but unfortunately we can't follow up as there was no information and no name. We do really want everyone to feel communicated with and will always work hard; if you feel that something hasn't been good for you, please do come and say - don't wait for a survey,

Many of you had helpful and constructive individual comments rather than areas that a group of people raised; we'll follow up with people or by actioning them and feeding back in the newsletter as appropriate.

Thank you for the feedback about the timing of letting you know that we were going to return to getting changed for PE in school; we appreciate this could have been sooner and apologise for any inconvenience around buying uniform.

### **You said, We're doing!**

Most of the suggestions for improvement were different from all respondents; thank you for those and we are considering them all. However, two Parents/Carers' made the suggestion that we include more outdoor learning. We agree, and have been considering how to improve from the outdoor learning we implemented last year, so it is on our School Development plan this year, and as you will have seen from Mrs Spaul's request last week, we have requested your help and support for the Forest school area that we want to create. We are lucky that Miss George is Forest School trained, and so she is going to be giving us a little more of her time (she works part-time) to come in and develop this. We are lucky that Mr Stagg, Mr Parkinson and Mr Pearce, our sports coaches are also happy to implement outdoor learning and have been doing so last year and this year.

We would like to launch a competition for our children - Design our Forest school! Do you have great ideas about outdoor activities? What outdoor learning would you like to do? We'd like you to draw or write your ideas on a template that will be sent home for you all (and be on the website in case you need another one!) for you to do over half-term, with a closing date of Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November. The entries will be reviewed by our Head and Deputy Head Pupils and a design team created. Exciting stuff!

### **Prayer**


Dear God,  
Thank you for our school community  
And for everyone who helps us.  
Give us the courage to try new things.  
Amen

Thank you as always for your support and remember our door is always open if you need anything, have a query or even an idea.

Emma Spaul and Anne Neary



Head of School  
Castle Acre CE Primary Academy



Executive Head Teacher  
The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies  
Castle Acre, Narborough and Sporle

Allergy Aware Schools – Please do not send nuts into Nar Valley Federation Academies