



Diocese of Norwich  
Education and  
Academies Trust

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## The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Neary

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

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Winter is truly here – the first frost appeared on Monday morning and the wet stuff that fell out the sky on Wednesday at pick up time seemed almost sleet like. In my son's eyes that makes it almost Christmas and there is certainly that feel. The Christmas songs are out and the children are practising in earnest and we are looking forward to our carols around the tree next Friday. We have a good mix of carols and more modern songs so something for everyone we hope and audience participation is obligatory! Despite lots of Christmas practice, the children have carried on with their learning and it is a real pleasure to walk into all 3 classes and see their fantastic learning behaviours. Oak class have really lived up to being the eldest children in school and I have been amazed at the writing they have all produced over the past week – I think every time I have walked in I could hear a pin drop! I would just like to congratulate all our children who went to the Cross Country finals at Kings Lynn. Mrs Neary went with them and she said they were amazing and tried their very best. She commented on the camaraderie between the children and how well they supported each other. A big congratulations to Lola who came 3<sup>rd</sup> in her race. Someone described to me that when she runs, she makes it look effortless so maybe we have an Olympic star in the making. Well done to all our children and keep going everyone!!

### Parent/Carer Forum

Thank you to those who attended our Parent/Carer Forum yesterday. We had a lovely discussion over a cup of tea/coffee. It was great to hear all the positives about how the children are enjoying their learning as well as the wider aspects of school life. We had a good chat about trips and residential visits. There will be a residential towards the end of the year for Years 5 & 6 and we will of course be doing our Castle Acre school sleep over in the summer term too (we may even venture into sleeping in tents on the field!). We will continue to try to do as many trips as we can but we are very conscious of the cost in the current climate. Therefore, we are also going to explore experiences we can bring into school and try to do a mixture of both. If you know of a good organisation who would be willing to come into school to teach or show the children something then do let us know. The parents who attended really helped us in sharing some of the things that had been done before and we will definitely building in some more 'off timetable project' days. We all enjoyed the Jubilee picnic but know that for parents who work it is tricky so talked about doing something into the evening with music, a BBQ and some games at the end of the summer term.

Something else that was discussed was rewarding those children who demonstrate our school values all of the time (of which we have many) beyond the systems we already have in place. We already reward children with team points and each class works towards a treat over a term. A child from each class is presented with a Shining Light certificate and this will now change to a child from each year group and then those children will join Mrs Spaul for a hot chocolate on a Friday afternoon. Don't worry – all children who have already received their Shining Light certificate this term will be rewarded with their hot chocolate before the end of term. From

the Spring Term, we are also going to give all children who show exceptional behaviour a treat such as going to the castle or bringing in an experience or even taking them out somewhere. We will share with you and the children more details about this and how this will work in January. We have many children who really do 'let their light shine' all the time and we agree with you that they deserve to have that recognised. Once again, it was a lovely meeting and great to hear your ideas too. We are one school family. If you weren't able to make this one then do come to the next.

### **Upcoming Dates**

This is a busy time of year so do keep an eye on the date sheet. Coming up this week, we have the Carols around the Tree on Friday at 2:30 and the Friends Christmas Fayre on Saturday from 10-12.

### **Christmas Dates**

Carols around the Tree – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2:30pm

Friends Christmas Fayre – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 10-12 pm

Reception/KS1 Theatre trip – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December

KS2 Theatre trip – Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

Christmas Jumper day and Christmas Lunch – Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December

Rowan and Whitebeam Nativity – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2pm & Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 6pm (children to arrive at 5:30pm)

Christmas Service – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December 1:45pm (in St James' Church)

### **Friends Christmas Fayre**

The Friends of Castle Acre School Christmas Fayre is on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 10-12 pm. The children will be busy making decorations to sell and will be preparing some games to play. If you can lend a hand, it would be much appreciated so please come to the school office or see Libby Firth. If you would like to give a donation for prizes e.g. bottles, toiletries, toys/games then please leave them in the box outside school.

### **Facebook Page**

The Friends have set up a Facebook page, the easiest way to find the page is when on Facebook, search for 'Castle Acre CofE Primary School' and you will see the page. Or try clicking on this link: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087116171278> The Friends aim to keep the Facebook page quite newsy, informative and celebrate cool things the school does. Also use it as a place to share wider events and activities that might be of interest to families.

### **Attendance this week/since beginning of term**

We have been hit with quite a lot of illness over the last couple of weeks. We know that it is tough when you are feeling a bit under the weather and there will be times when your child is genuinely not well enough to come to school but if they have a bit of a sniffle or a little cough then they can be in school. We will look after them and we will always call you if we feel that they are not well. Let's see if we can hit that 96% target of strong attendance by the end of term!

Oak Class – 93.1% / 92.82%

Whitebeam Class – 87.18% / 93.7%

Rowan Class – 94.74% / 92.82%

Whole School – 92.35% / 92.32%

**CONGRATULATIONS ROWAN CLASS THIS WEEK!**

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.

## **School Council**

As you will know from the message sent out yesterday, school council have launched their art competition. For £1 you can submit your entry of a Santa made out of anything creative from colouring to Lego. Entries to be in school on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Remember to put your name on them.

## **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!

## **Drop off and Pick Up**

Just a polite reminder – please can you make sure you park carefully at drop off and pick up. Our bus driver has had a few occasions where he has not been able to park or turn. In the mornings particularly, please leave the bus bay clear. Thank you in advance for your co-operation with this matter.

## **News from our Classes**

### **Rowan**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Ivy for using a tens frame to find her number bonds to 5 and 10, well done!

**Reader of the Week** – Etta for always showing such an enthusiasm for reading and her love of sharing books with others.

**Writer of the Week** – Bobbi for his wonderful attitude towards writing this week.

**Shining Lights of the Week (Reception)** – Florence for showing kindness to a friend by making them a wonderful personalised picture.

**Shining Lights of the Week (Year 1)** - Isla B for her superb learning attitude this week! Well done!

Rowan class has been incredibly busy this week! In DT, the children explored primary colours and secondary colours through colour mixing which will help us when we design our Diya lamps. In RE, we read the Nativity story and learned about the importance of Christmas and why some people celebrate it. Rowan class were superb at acting it out to show their understanding! In geography we have been learning about India and learned about the five oceans, and more specifically, which oceans are linked to the UK and India! We also looked at some traditional Indian foods and tasted them - delicious!

### **Whitebeam**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Carter for super work finding patterns in addition and subtraction calculations.

**Reader of the Week** – Tyler for his enthusiasm and great attitude towards reading.

**Writer of the Week** – Logan for super writing, including using his phonics and lovely letter formation.

**Shining Lights of the Week** - the whole of Whitebeam Class for demonstrating our values of respect, responsibility, kindness and courage when we visited the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

### **Children's Worship** - Lola, Elliot, Alexander and Tia

Another great week in Whitebeam Class with the highlight being last Friday when we went to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The children were all amazing. It was a long journey but they entertained themselves - I now know a lot more 'knock, knock' jokes! The museum is amazing and we took the opportunity to look at the architecture of it which includes some amazing ceilings and staircases along with surrounding buildings and we were lucky enough to be allowed into the grounds of King's College to see the buildings there including the

outside of the chapel. The Ancient Egyptian section of the museum holds a great range of artefacts and the museum staff led a very interesting workshop. We also took the opportunity of visiting some of the art galleries and saw some paintings by Picasso, Constable and Monet to name just a few. The children were also interested to see the armoury and ceramic galleries as we walked through the museum to get to our workshop. Back in school we have been looking at inverse operations for addition and subtraction in maths, thinking of the chronology of the different periods in Ancient Egypt in history and designing and making lego step pyramids in art before we make our clay pyramids. We have been reading about different aspects of Ancient Egyptian life and in English continue to work on our biographies of Howard Carter and in Science we are exploring different materials.

## **Oak**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Erin for being responsible in her learning and giving herself further extension questions in maths and not giving up with equivalent fractions.

**Reader of the Week** – Jess for being able to show empathy and understanding to a character's thoughts and feelings in a text.

**Writer of the Week** - Mason for a huge effort in the amount and the quality of what he has been writing this week - so much so, he has even earned a pen license!

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 4)** – James for a vast improvement this week in attitude and effort to all areas of school life.

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 5)** – Elliot for working on his learning behaviours and 'being better than yesterday.

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 6)** – Didier for consistently showing school values and taking responsibility in all areas of his learning, choosing to challenge himself further.

**Pen licence** - for Mason

This week in Oak class, we have transported back to Ancient times and discussed all of the different factors that made up some early civilisations. We have noticed that the Ancient Egyptians, Ancient Sumer, Indus Valley and Shang Dynasty were all located on the same line of latitude, which has helped us understand how history and geography are so closely linked. Our children have finished their informative writing on these ancient civilisations and their beliefs in the afterlife. We have now started our maths learning on fractions and have begun to use equivalent fractions and working out fractions of a number. Some children have even challenged themselves by working out how to multiply a number by an integer. All adults that entered the classroom this week were impressed with the fantastic learning behaviours demonstrated by each child - well done, Oak class!

## **Message from Executive Headteacher**

A huge congratulations to all our children from across the Federation who competed in the finals of the Cross Country yesterday at LynnSport. I was incredibly proud of their determined and positive attitude and their resilience; they all achieved a great deal, whether it was running more confidently than last year or beating their place from last year or just giving it a really good go. Well done to Lola, Jess, Holly, Erin, Sammy and Rory. A particular well done to Finley from Foxes in Narborough and Lola from Oak in Castle Acre who both gained a medal for coming second and third respectively in their races. A big thank you to our families who took your children to the race and supported them, we really appreciate that.

## **Online safety**

A recent study has shown that 44% of 8-12 year olds in the UK use TikTok, despite its policies forbidding under 13's on the platform. TikTok is currently under investigation and may well be fined £27 million for failing to protect children from some of its content. Please do consider; does your child currently use a platform that may contain sexual or otherwise inappropriate content and if so, how do you keep them safe? Research by the Children's Commissioner found that 45% of 8-17 year olds have seen content online that is upsetting to them. This is a link to a BBC article that documents some of things that children have seen and been asked to do for Robux in Roblox: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/63357995>

Remember that our Pupil Voice in Autumn 1 found that a significant number of our children told us that they had seen things online in the holidays that bothered, worried or upset them. Let's make sure we are all having conversations about online content so that our children are able to talk to us and be protected.

### **Parents/Carers' Forums**

Thank you very much to everyone who came along to these this half-term. There were no particular themes arising other than those we have already covered in the newsletter

### **Attendance**

Thank you for continuing to ensure that your children are in school. It really does make a difference to their school success.

Just to let you all know you're most welcome to the Friends Of Castle Acre School Castle Acre Christmas Fayre Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup> 10am-12pm.

### **Prayer – by Ella and Leo**

Dear God,

Thank you for all the food and drinks we have today.  
We hope that everyone gets treated,  
And all will pay attention to the children who have no roofs over their heads,  
And a meal in front of them.

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