



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 3rd February 2023

Dear Parents,

We have had a wonderful week this week. I had the pleasure of showing around one of our colleagues from our Trust, DNEAT, and discussing what learning and school life is like at Castle Acre. We had some amazing feedback, particularly around the excellent behaviour and learning behaviours of our children and our very strong inclusive environment. It was clear from the discussions she had with the children and looking in their books that our curriculum is exciting and the children are able to develop new skills and remember more. We visited all classes. Rowan Class showed us the broad bean seeds that they had planted and Toby & Tia impressed us with their mathematical skills. Whitebeam were engrossed in finding facts out about starfish, sea anemones and shore crabs - did you know starfish have 5 eyes and no central brain. I was super pleased that I had been in their class to find these facts out as I was able to beat the chaser on The Chase that same evening when the question about the brain came up! Oak Class were finding out about air resistance, making paper planes and helicopters and other flying machines. It was a little deadly entering the corridor as they tested them out but the understanding and knowledge they had and developed was outstanding. I think my highlight of the visit was catching up with one of our Year 5s today who told me she had spoken with our visitor. I asked the Year 5 if she had told the visitor that we are amazing – to which she replied ‘no, but she told us we are amazing and in my books that’s even better!’ It absolutely blows me away how wonderful our children are here and how lucky I am to be in the school with every single one of them. I must also say a huge shout out to our staff here at Castle Acre as they work incredibly hard to make the school what it is and of course you, our families, as you help shape it too.

### Attendance

We are working hard this year to ensure that we reach the best attendance we can. 96% is considered strong attendance and 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.

#### Attendance this week/since beginning of the academic year

Oak Class – 97.5% / 93.19%

Whitebeam Class – 96.43% / 94.57%

Rowan Class – 95.79% / 93.8%

Whole School – 96.72% / 93.68%

CONGRATULATIONS **OAK CLASS** THIS WEEK – YOU WON THE ATTENDANCE!

WELL DONE WHITEBEAM – YOU EXCEEDED 96%!

WELL DONE CASTLE ACRE SCHOOL – WE EXCEEDED 96%!

## Dates

Please keep an eye on the date sheet for any upcoming dates.

## Parents Consultation

The dates for our Parent Consultation Evenings are Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February (3.30 – 5.30pm/6pm for Oak Class) and Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February (3.30 – 7pm). The teachers will be out nearer to half term with time sheets for you to choose a slot. Please can we remind you that these slots are 10 minutes long and are to chat about your child's learning. If there is anything else you wish to discuss then you will need to make another appointment.

If you have a child with additional needs then we will offer you either a longer time slot on one of our allocated dates or a time in the week before half term. This is to ensure that you have enough time to discuss how they are getting on with their learning and also the provision that is in place for them.

Where you have more than one child in school, we do work really hard to ensure that the appointments are as close together as possible but there is a possibility that there may be a little gap between them.

We look forward to being able to share your child's successes and next steps with you.

## Tuck Shop

We took a little break from running tuck shop last term but our eager team of Year 5s and 6s would like to get it up and running again. They would very much like to hear your point of view on whether you would like a tuck shop and if so, some of your thoughts about frequency, stock and prices. There will be a survey coming out in the near future.

## PE Kits

Please can I remind you that your child needs to have their PE kits in school from Monday to Friday and it needs to include a separate sweatshirt or jumper from their school one. We try and go outside as much as possible, especially the older children, and if they fall over wearing their school one it can become wet or dirty. If your child's kit becomes particularly wet or dirty then we will send it home!

## Toys In School

Please can we remind you that children should not be bringing in toys from home into school unless pre-arranged with the teacher or if they are Child of the Day for show and tell. If this is the case, then they will be asked to put it in the teacher's cupboard until they show it at the end of the day. We are noticing an increase in toys coming in and there is the possibility that they will get lost or broken and they do cause a distraction from working. We appreciate your co-operation with this matter.

## 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!

## News from our Classes

### Rowan

**Mathematician of the Week** – Bobbi, for showing such pride in his maths work this week and choosing to challenge himself further.

**Reader of the Week** – Oliver P, for working so hard to read consistently and moving up a coloured book band.

**Writer of the Week** – Leon, for working really hard with an adult in his writing to create some excellent sentences.

**Shining Lights of the Week (Reception)** – Ella, for showing a lot of responsibility and demonstrating our class promises beautifully this week.

**Shining Lights of the Week (Year 1)** - Crimson, for his incredible hard work on his fairy tale character drawing and his excellent sentence about it!

I can't believe it's the penultimate week of the first spring term! Hopefully we are moving closer towards some brighter, warmer days! In English, the children have worked incredibly hard to draw and write about their favourite fairy tale characters. Their work was absolutely superb and has been put together to create a beautiful display outside of our classroom, which you will be able to look at during our next parent-teacher meetings. In PE, the children have enjoyed our block on yoga and have learned lots of different yoga poses, how to breathe and focus on something when we need to balance. This week, we were creating astronaut poses, which, when put together in a sequence, created a space yoga flow! Yesterday in science, the children planted broad bean seeds and discussed what is needed by plants to grow well. It was a perfect afternoon for it as the sun was shining outside in our canopy area. Have a lovely weekend, from all of us in Rowan class.

### **Whitebeam**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Mason F for his super arithmetic work this week.

**Reader of the Week** – Rowan for participating well in our reading sessions and making thoughtful contributions.

**Writer of the Week** – Molly for taking care with the presentation of her work and joining her letters

**Shining Lights of the Week (Year 2)** - Jasper for his kindness as he is very caring and thinks of others.

**Shining Lights of the Week (Year 3)** - Fletcher for his responsibility towards his own learning.

**Children's Worship** - Erin, Finley, Sybil, Olivia

Where has the past week gone? This week seems to have flown by and has been another busy one in Whitebeam. As we look forward to our trip to Hunstanton on Monday, the children have been thinking about different habitats around the world and how animals have adapted to live in them. We have also thought about microhabitats closer to home including rock pools and with partners, the children used Chromebooks to find out about what lives in rock pools and how they are suited to this particular habitat. Whilst working on this they have made a list of questions they would like to ask at the Sealife Centre (lots of cross curricular learning!) In maths we have revised odd and even numbers and half and double and how these connect to the 2 times table. Our next focus in maths will be fractions and we will be looking at fractions of numbers, measures and shapes. We have been learning about Relationships in RSE with the focus being on bullying for the Y2 children. In English the children have written newspaper reports about Grace Darling and Henry Blogg and in history we have been learning about primary and secondary sources of information and will continue with this next week as we look at Victorian artefacts. The class are really enjoying gymnastics with Mr Pearce and he is very pleased with their learning behaviours and how enthusiastic they are in lessons. Well done Whitebeam.

### **Oak**

**Mathematician of the Week** – Seth for his excellent work on ratio this week and being keen to complete all of the questions set.

**Reader of the Week** – Freya for contributing really thoughtful answers in our reading comprehension lessons for this week and always reading for pleasure at home.

**Writer of the Week** – James for trying really hard to improve his punctuation this week.

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 4)** – Finley for giving all of our tests this week his best efforts and always maintaining huge enthusiasm for his learning.

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 5)** – Esther for her amazingly positive attitude towards both her maths and English work this week and for trying her best with her assessments.

**Shining Light of the Week (Year 6)** – Didier for always being such a helpful and polite member of our class and for completing regular home learning to extend his understanding.

This week in Oak class we have continued with our termly assessments but have still managed to fit in lots of learning. In maths we have completed lots of arithmetic practice and have started learning about ratio, linking this to our fractions work. In English, we have looked at the features of instructional writing and have created success criteria for our own piece of writing which we are about to start. In geography, we have been looking at how mountains are formed and working on our skills in finding longitude and latitude. In science, we extended our experiments in air resistance, creating gliders and helicopters and we explored how the designs for these

help to create higher air pressure underneath to create lift force. In computing we have started to explore online safety – next Tuesday is Safer Internet Day and we will be learning more about this over the coming days. In art, we created repeating patterns that we can then make use of when we start creating prints next week.

### **Message from Executive Headteacher**

#### **Online Safety**

Mrs Blakey, our Federation Computing Lead, has been liaising with the police to put together some online safety work for our children. We've got a number of events coming up to support our work in this area, beginning with the following:

Norfolk Constabulary's Safer Schools Team will be delivering two free online events for parents and carers about keeping children safe online. They will take place on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 11am-12pm and again at 4pm-5pm. Please see the attached flyer which includes links to an Eventbrite booking system. We hope you are able to attend one of the sessions and that you find it useful.

#### **Parents/Carers' Survey**

As you know, we ask the views of our children about various different aspects of school each half-term, and this helps shape our work. Following our autumn pupil voice where it was clear that children had some needs to do with online safety, we asked them more about their online time, needs and worries or things they enjoy. We found that many of the children say they use apps for older children, that many of them want to know more about online safety and that many of them do not think they have any privacy settings on their apps or devices. 49% of the children do not know how to use privacy settings to keep themselves safe. 42% believe they spend more than 3 hours a day with screen time. Lots of our children said that if they saw something online that worried them, they would simply switch it off or exit the app or game and wouldn't say anything to anyone.

So now it is your turn! We'd like to know what questions or worries you have about online time and what you might like from school.

The survey link was sent out today and we'd be really grateful for your responses. We're working closely with the police and other children's agencies to ensure that our teaching covers what our children need to know and we need your input into that. Many thanks.

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