



Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Neary

Web: www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk

Friday 24th March 2023

Dear Parents,

Here we are, just one week off the end of the Spring Term. I cannot believe that we are two thirds of the way through the year already and next term I know will just fly by. We have had some gloriously sunny days this week and there is a greater eagerness in the children to get out and be outside. There have been some days where coats have been discarded and even the odd jumper (children are always far more resilient than adults!). Over the past few weeks, I have been really looking out for times when our children show respect and kindness towards others. We are very fortunate here that it is often shown in abundance and this is noted regularly by our outside visitors. This week I was particularly struck by the kindness shown by our children when one of our younger pupils hurt himself quite badly. There were a lot of children, even those not in his class, who wanted to know if he was ok and regularly asked. They wanted to care for him and know if there was anything they could do to help. It is so lovely to be part of our family and I know that everyone is truly looked after by others. Once again, I am impressed by the learning that is happening around the school. Rowan Class have been completing amazing morning work – rhyming words were on the agenda this morning and Reception were whizzing through matching pictures. A couple of children had also written some beautiful numbers. I enjoyed watching Whitebeam (from a distance) while they covered some models (and themselves, Miss Taylor, Mrs McGarrell and their classroom) in Modroc! I had the pleasure of teaching Oak Class for the day yesterday. Mrs Blakey had very kindly left step by step instructions. I absolutely love being back in the classroom and being with our children in a different role. I was impressed by their problem solving skills and discussion techniques as they debated why the answer to 13×13 had to more than 144. The listened respectfully to each other and even though it was a discussion from the back to the front of the class, it was handled in a very mature way. Looking forward to next week, we have a trip on Wednesday for Rowan Class to Melsop Park Farm. We will be ending our term with our service in St. James' church on Friday afternoon at 1:45pm. We will be bringing the children back to school following the service so they can collect their belongings where you can pick them up as soon as they are ready or at the end of the school day at 3:10pm.

Staffing Update

We are very sorry to say that we will be saying goodbye to Mrs Blakey at the end of this term. Her personal circumstances have changed and she has been offered a career outside teaching that allows her to work in a way that suits her family needs. We will be very sorry to see her go and want to thank Mrs Blakey for all that she's done for our children.

From the Summer Term, Mrs Livvie Neville will be coming to teach Oak on a Thursday and Friday who has worked with us before at Sporle.

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 – **96.43%** / 94.02%

Whitebeam Class – **98.41%** / 95.42%

Rowan Class – **98.83%** / 94.41%

Whole School – **97.63%** / 94.45%

CONGRATULATIONS **ROWAN** CLASS THIS WEEK – YOU WON THE ATTENDANCE – **98.83%**
WELL DONE OAK AND WHITEBEAM – YOU BOTH EXCEEDED 96%!

WELL DONE CASTLE ACRE SCHOOL – WE EXCEEDED 96%!

Holidays

Please be aware that we will not be authorising any holidays during term time unless under special circumstances. Whilst we understand the rising costs of holidays and that there is a significant difference in cost between during school holiday and out of school holiday time, any time off has a significant impact on your child's education. Any holidays taken during term time are discussed with our attendance officer in our termly meetings.

Dates

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

King's Coronation

On Friday May 5th, we will be celebrating the King's Coronation in school. We will be having a day of events in school which will culminate in some work and activities to showcase at the end of the day. As this is a family occasion, we would love for you to join us from 2:30pm for an Afternoon Tea style event to look at our showcase as well as share in some activities and games inside and out. You can collect your child as soon as you arrive if before 3:10, or at 3:10 as normal. We will be here until about 4:30/5:00pm so do come along at any time until then and stay. We will have some refreshments but you are more than welcome to bring your own Afternoon Tea to share with your family. Parents, carers, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings are all welcome. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Chicken Pox

We have had one confirmed case of Chicken Pox in Rowan Class. If you believe your child has chicken pox, please let us know and keep them off school until their spots have crusted over. Please note that the NHS strongly advises that you do not use ibuprofen unless advised to do so by a doctor, as it may cause serious skin infections.

Medicines.

We understand that there will be times when your child needs medication if they are poorly. Our policy is that where prescribed medications are concerned, we will administer them in accordance with the direction from the doctor. We also know that there are times your child may need medication that is not prescribed, such as paracetamol. We are happy to administer this medication but our policy states that we are only able to give one dose. If, after that does, your child's symptoms do not ease or improve then we will call you but we cannot administer any further doses. All medication must be handed into the school office and you will need to fill in a form. Medication must be in its original box or container. If you wish to see our policy for administering medicines it is available on the website or available from the school office.

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

Thank you for your co-operation in the matter of not bringing in toys from home into school unless pre-arranged with the teacher or for show and tell if your child is Child of the Day.

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!

Meet the SENDCo - due to sickness, this will now be postponed to week beginning 17th April

I will be putting in some dates week beginning 17th April for a 'come and chat with the SENDCo' so watch this space. You will not need to have an appointment, just drop in and I will have the kettle on and biscuits ready to discuss any questions or queries relating to your child and how they are getting on at school. 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 super work on number bonds to 10.

Reader of the Week – Etta for great determination when reading the storybooks in phonics.

Writer of the Week – Finn for a great contribution when writing our class vegetable poem including rhyming words, adjectives and similes.

Shining Lights of the Week (Reception) - Isla P for being a great friend and always showing kindness.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 1) – Isla B for consistently presenting and demonstrating our class promises.

Another fantastic week in Rowan Class, lots of super learning. In English year 1 they have started to write their vegetable poems including rhyming words, adjectives and similes. Reception have wrote an acrostic poem about a carrot and some great ideas were given. In maths, reception have continued with their number bonds to 10 and year 1 have been learning about mass and capacity using cubes to weigh different objects. Next week we will compare capacity by filling different containers. In science we have been learning about the basic parts of a human body. Lots of great discussions were had. We used a range of different craft materials to create the human body. Well done Rowan class.

Whitebeam

Mathematician of the Week – Jasper for his work on telling the time.

Reader of the Week – Tyler for the increased fluency when reading.

Writer of the Week – Fletcher for retelling the Passover story.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 2) - Molly for her kindness to others especially when with younger children.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 3) - Holly for always demonstrating respect and excellent learning behaviours.

Children's worship - Etta, Esther, Izzy, Maddie and Olivia

This week in Whitebeam the children have continued to work on their persuasive leaflet and have read different articles to find facts and statistics about pollution. They have also used the chromebooks to research plastic pollution and noise pollution in our oceans and again found many interesting but sometimes shocking facts and figures. In maths our focus has changed and we have been thinking about time and have been learning to tell the time practically on clocks and the Y3 children have explored the history of roman numerals and made clocks using these! In geography they enjoyed finding out about the journey of a river from its source

to the sea and we read a lovely book linked to this called Song of the River by Joy Cowley. The children have also enjoyed The Rainbow Bear by Michael Morpurgo which we have been reading this week. In art the children were very keen to use Modroc to cover their fish sculptures and had great, but messy, fun as they covered their fish and were surprised by how hard and quickly it dried! They are also enjoying the yoga sessions that we have started and have demonstrated just how flexible they are. Well done Whitebeam for another super week.

Oak

Mathematician of the Week – Rory for demonstrating resilience and overcoming his most difficult maths challenge to date.

Reader of the Week – Ruby for being so engrossed in her reading book!

Writer of the Week - Alex for supporting a class member with their writing and providing some brilliant feedback.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 4) – Roxanne for continuously putting in her best effort into everything she does.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 5) – Izzy for always demonstrating our school values and being a trusted and reliable member of our class.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 6) – Sammy for always engaging in all areas of his learning and being a great role model to others.

This week, Oak class have been collating all of their learning about narratives and have almost finished their own writing. They have made sure to include brilliant descriptive writing and dialogue within their piece. In our maths work, we have finished off our learning of fractions, decimals and percentages by learning about their equivalence. We have also looked at the area of triangles and consolidated our knowledge of calculating the area of compound shapes. In computing this week, we have been learning about how we can ensure that we use reliable sources for our Internet research and how we can spot 'fake news.' In our RSHE morning on Wednesday, we looked at identity and beliefs and discussed how we should be respectful of the differences and similarities between us and although all families come in different shapes and sizes, all are to be celebrated. In our DT lesson this week we tested out the streamline and speed of our slingshot cars by seeing who's car would travel the furthest - Rory and Didier's travelled the furthest, with Esther's coming in close behind!

Message from Executive Headteacher

Mrs Paula Smith

Many of you will have heard that our lovely Mrs Smith, one of our Teaching Assistants at Sporle died incredibly suddenly on Tuesday of this week of an unknown brain bleed. This has been a huge shock for everyone, leaving a gaping hole in our Sporle and wider Federation family, but we have all felt supported by the messages of support, cards and the floral tributes laid for Mrs Smith under the tree at Sporle school. Our children and staff have done so well this week despite this massive loss. Mrs Smith had worked at school for over 13 years, starting as a lunchtime member of staff before finding the role she embodied so well as such a compassionate, kind, thoughtful and helpful member of our pastoral Teaching Assistant team. Very few children in school have not been helped by her at some point, with her kind words, unflappably calm manner and incredibly thoughtful actions. Mrs Smith was the definition of our school values; she was always unfailingly kind to everyone, used her pastoral and therapeutic training to support children who needed her help and no matter what was going on for her in her life, thought of others always. There is much more that could be said and will be when the time is right to honour her memory.

For now, I want to pay tribute to our brave staff team at Sporle, and more widely across the Federation, who despite having to cope with the shock and pain of losing a colleague this week so cruelly quickly, have worked so hard to meet the children's needs and continue to teach, support and share happy memories and moments so that our children begin to understand that we all leave our mark on the people we interact with and someone is never truly gone when those who knew and loved them remember them.

Psalm 48:14

For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.

Talking to children about someone dying is emotionally hard and we can all worry we're not doing it correctly. Attached is some information that may support you if you'd like.

Y4/5/6 Trip to Castle Museum

A huge well done to all our Y4/5/6 children across the Federation, Otters, Kingfishers and Oak classes, who represented our school extremely well on the trip, which took place on two days. The knowledge that our children demonstrated was commented on by the museum staff as being very good, the questions that I heard them asking were excellent and they all enjoyed the practical activities, which ranged from building a democratic settlement, grinding wheat for bread (a chore each day that we learned gave rise to the term 'the daily grind') to philosophical thought experiments and writing in ancient languages. This was an absolutely wonderful trip and we again thank our Parent/Teacher/Friends groups for subsidising the cost of the travel to make the trip happen. Many schools are having to severely restrict or stop such trips, and so we are incredibly grateful to our lovely people across the Federation who give their energy to fundraising so our children can benefit from such curriculum enrichment.

Friends of Sporle School Bingo

After discussions, FOSS and our staff team believe that Paula would want this to carry on, and so we would like to warmly invite you to the Easter Bingo next week at Sporle; entrance from 7pm and eyes down at 7.30pm.

As it is the last week of term next week, there won't be a newsletter, but please look out for the end of term letter.

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