



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 16th June 2023

Dear Parents,

It has been a warm week at Castle Acre – phew! We have enjoyed plenty of outside time but we are remembering to take lots of breaks and are encouraging all our children to drink plenty. I believe the children have been making good use of the bushes and trees to seek some shelter. Please can you help us out by making sure that your child has a water bottle and a sun hat and that they either apply the 8 hour sun cream before school or bring some with them. We give them time throughout the day to reapply sun cream but we cannot apply it for them.

We were very fortunate to have a slightly unexpected visit from our Beat Officer, Glen. Whilst he was here, Rowan and Whitebeam Classes were very excited to be able to ask lots of questions about his job and all the equipment he was wearing and of course there was a photo opportunity. Oak Class were more interested in showing their competitive streak whilst practising for Sports Day! Glen said how lovely it was to be with the children and how polite and well-mannered they were. We appreciate him taking time out of his busy schedule to chat to us and we look forward to welcoming him back to talk to the children about a range of safety topics.

It was for a slightly frustrating reason that Glen had to visit as we have had some intruders onto the school grounds over the past months who have unfortunately caused some criminal damage. We would like to reassure you that we are taking steps to make our site more secure and will be installing CCTV and Glen will be making frequent visits out of school hours. It is sad that we have to take these measures but we want the children to be able to enjoy their environment without worry that something is going to be spoiled.

We have been working hard over the past few weeks to develop our outside space (on a very minimal budget!). We now have sunflowers, runner beans, beetroot and radishes, tomatoes, courgettes, strawberries and cucumbers as well as some garden flowers growing. We would like to thank all our families who have donated pots and plants but we would really like more, particularly for the front area. If you have any planters, pots, hanging baskets, flowers or compost that need a new home, we are quite happy and more than grateful to adopt them!

Sports Day

Our Sports Day will be held on 23rd June. As in previous years we invite families to join us for a picnic on the field from 12pm before we start the track events just after 1pm. **Please note that there will only be school packed lunches available on this day, no hot lunch options.** Just some prior warning that we ask your child comes in their PE kit that day as we do field events in the morning. Please can they wear a t-shirt in their team colour. If you are not sure what team your child is in, please ask their teacher.

Don't forget that there will be a parent's race and a toddler's race to take part in too!

NB: PLEASE CAN THE CHILDREN HAVE THEIR PE KIT IN ALL WEEK FOR PRACTICE.

Tuck Shop

Tuck Shop is going well and we are being eaten out of house and home. We are increasing the variety of products on sale as we learn what the children like. Please do ask about allergens.

Wet Weather Gear Plea!

As we develop our Forest School Area space, we are wanting to make use of it more and more. We like to be out in all weathers so if you have any spare wet weather gear (waterproof trousers, coats, all-in-ones, wellies) then we would be happy to give them a new home! Please send them to the school office or to Miss George.

Outdoor Space

We have already started working with some of the children on the garden area, tidying up a bit and getting the beds ready to grow some crops. I will be working with the children over the rest of the Summer Term to continue this and create some clear spaces. We are incredibly fortunate to be in the location we are and have the space we do and we want to maximise the use of it. Miss George is working hard on developing the Forest School area and that is really taking shape now. I don't want to give too much away as I want the children to have their input and take some ownership over it but I will look forward to sharing their thoughts and ideas with you over the coming weeks. If you have any ideas you would like to share or think you may be able to help with resources, equipment or time as we develop this then please let us know. Thank you in advance.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check

For the last few years, Year 4 have been required to complete a Multiplication Tables Check. This is a short test online and is to be completed between the 5th June and 16th June. Please encourage your child to practice their tables every night, the speedier the better! Thank you for your support and if you have any questions then please see Miss George or myself.

Year 1 Phonics Test

Well done to our Year 1 children who completed their Phonics Screening this week.

Attendance

We are really pleased with our attendance at the moment – we are always striving for 100% but anything 96% or above we are happy with. We thank you for all your support in keeping the children in school, especially as we have been battling the summer colds. It really does make a difference them being here!

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.

Show and Tell Toys

As you will be aware, the children are allowed to bring in something to show and talk about when they are Child of the Day. Can we ask that these are age appropriate and are not related to computer or online games. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Dates

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

News from our Classes

Rowan

Mathematician of the Week – Bobbi for your super effort and determination when working out one more/one less of numbers up to 100.

Reader of the Week – Isla B for showing a great amount of perseverance through a tricky phonics test.

Writer of the Week – Florence for writing a fantastic independent sentence including a capital letter and full stop.

Shining Lights of the Week (Reception) Ivy for always being so helpful and caring towards others.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 1) – Leon for your super effort and perseverance when some tasks became a little tricky.

Shining Lights of the Week – All of year 1, for your fantastic efforts, perseverance and dedication on some tricky assessments this week.

This week in Rowan class we have had a very busy week, we have been enjoying the sunshine with lots of outdoor learning which has been fantastic. We had a great time at the Fun run on Tuesday. Year 1 have been working extremely hard with their phonics screening and reception have really enjoyed using their previous knowledge within the continuous provision, we have seen some fantastic animal reports in a vets. In history we have begun to look at travel through space and made our own timeline. Well done Rowan class!

Whitebeam

Mathematician of the Week – Fletcher for working independently and always trying his best.

Reader of the Week – Jasper for super reading and discussing what he has read.

Writer of the Week – Jasper for his poem using alliteration.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 2) - Logan for always being calm and a good attitude towards his learning.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 3) - Tyler for his good attitude towards learning.

In Whitebeam Class this week the children are really enjoying 'The day the crayons quit' by Drew Daywalt and can't wait to find out how each crayon is feeling during our daily reading sessions. They are also enjoying the book that we are currently basing our English on which is a wordless book 'Journey' by Aaron Becker. We are using this book as a stimulus to write our own journey adventures. In maths we continue to consolidate our learning and have been looking at solving problems involving time, 2D and 3D shapes and money. The Y2 had a great time at the Fun Run and came back with lots of stickers celebrating how far they had run. The distance had been reduced on the day due to the beautiful but very hot weather and the Y3 children have started their summer term PiXL assessments. In RE they have looked at the similarities between the Christian and Jewish stories of creation and in art they have made sketches of Castle Rising castle. They couldn't wait to see on Monday morning what had happened to the eggs in our egg experiment. They discovered that the shell had completely dissolved in the vinegar and in the orange juice the hard part of the shell came away easily if we scraped it. As predicted, the egg in the cola had turned a deeper shade of brown! On Thursday a group of Y10 students from TNHA came to play their instruments (including drums, electric guitars and a keyboard) and sing to us and they were all totally amazing. Well done Whitebeam another super week.

Oak

Mathematician of the Week – Nataniel for challenging himself with reading timetables.

Reader of the Week – Alex for being so engrossed in his new, historical non-fiction book.

Writer of the Week - James for a brilliant newspaper report.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 4) – Marley for being very welcoming to a new pupil.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 5) – Esther-Rae for overcoming challenges in maths and telling the time.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 6) – Ella for supporting friends when they're not feeling well.

This week, Oak class have come to the end of their newspaper writing based on 'Tuesday' and have recounted the strange incident of the flying frogs. In maths, we have spent some time revising telling the time and then applying this knowledge to understanding how to read timetables. In Spanish, we have introduced ourselves, asked how people are and responded. In geography, we considered different types of power stations and how we can harness renewable energy sources. Through this, we created our own pizza box solar ovens and attempted to bake cookies on them.

Message from Executive Headteacher

Y4 Residential

I am very pleased to let you know that we are able to offer the residential opportunity for Year 4 that we had originally planned to do last year. Hopefully we will not be defeated by an unprecedented heat wave this year!

As before, the venue is Westacre Theatre and we are going to be putting together a show to perform to families. We have a storyteller coming to give us an evening campfire story and trail. We will be camping in tents with the Theatre as a wet weather back up! The cost will be £25 per pupil with great thanks to Westacre Theatre for their sponsorship.

Please see the letter and form that went out yesterday for more details, including a Parents/Carers' meeting on Thursday 29th June, 3.30pm at Castle Acre.

Fines for Term Time Holidays

We want to make it really clear that term time holidays are in most circumstances unacceptable, and as per previous newsletters and our policy that you have received but is also on our website, from September we will be issuing fines for such holidays.

The fines are £120 per child (reduced to £60 for payment within 28 days) and they are per child per parent with parental responsibility, whether those parents are together or not.

This means that if you are a family of two children and two parents, you would have to pay £240. Failure to pay can result in the case going to court.

Please note, we do not get the money for fines, they go to the local authority, but not necessarily for education. Based on the applications this year, our Parents/Carers would have given the local authority quite a lot of money. Personally, I would rather this money stayed in our Parents/Carers' pockets and contributed to the cost of several weekend breaks or a holiday in school holiday time.

Everyone has a clean slate from September; please, please do not book term-time holidays and then your children will benefit, either by not having gaps in their learning, or by not missing out on opportunities in school. As we know, the research is stark, that children who miss time from education are usually behind their peers. Our children have enough barriers to their learning from Covid; let's not give them another.

Y6 Fleeces and Polo Shirts

If your child is leaving us at the end of Y6 this year and would like to donate back to school their fleeces and polo shirts, we would be really pleased to receive them so that we can support any upcoming Y6 children who may need them. Many thanks.

I have been very proud of our children this week; we have seen some wonderful achievements in learning their phonics, times tables and writing so far. Keep going children and well done!

Thank you to our Parents/Carers for your support with your children's homework - daily reading, Tackling Tables and Spelling Frame.

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