



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 8th September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

I generally offer a warm welcome back to school for the Autumn term and this year it certainly is! We hope that everyone enjoyed some good family time.

It is lovely to have started working with our new staff team members at each school; staff photos for each school will be coming out in next week's newsletter so that you know who everyone is and what class they are teaching in.

As always, we are looking forward to an action-packed and engaging year of learning, with trips, competitions, sporting endeavours and visitors, beginning with a visit from our Safer Schools Partnership police officer Hazel, who has given Y5/6 a workshop on safe behaviours and knife crime.

Thank you to everyone who entered the holiday Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths competition – I am very much looking forward to going along RAF Marham with the winners next week to see how they do on the flight simulator! We're really grateful to the RAF for this excellent opportunity for our children.

If you have been following the news about Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) I wanted to take this opportunity to reassure you that from all investigations and surveys there is no RAAC in any of our schools.

Please remember that as per the letter we sent out last year, and in line with local authority procedures, we can now fine for unauthorised holidays. We do not benefit from this financially, and do not want to be in the position of having to fine anyone, so we urge you, please do not book holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. We know that children who are in school 96% and more of the year do better in their GCSEs and we want all our children to have the greatest chance to do well.

Also just a reminder that the school day is now 8.40am until 3.10pm, with registration at 8.55am. Please ensure your child is on school premises at 8.35am in order to begin learning at 8.40am. 8.40am is the start of the school day.

Last year in our school development plan, we were focusing on:

1. Ensuring staff are most effectively supported to ensure all pupils' strong personal development and attainment, particularly that of children with SEND and Disadvantages as well as our More Able learners.

Actions taken included widening our Pupil roles and voice, ensuring we are a strong part of each school community, taking part in events such as Church services, improving attendance, focus on online safety, continuing to develop our very strong safeguarding practice and setting up a staff wellbeing group to support our excellent staff team.

2. Embedding the development of the curriculum, planning and delivery so that children are enabled to make strong progress and attainment continues to rise in all classes, particularly that of those children with Disadvantages or SEND and our More Able learners, so that the majority of year groups meet or exceed the PiXL national.
3. Ensuring that assessment, moderation, and therapies / interventions / adaptations are effectively used so that children make rapid progress and attain in line with or above the PiXL average and that the attainment of children rises, particularly those with Disadvantages or with SEND and our More Able learners.

Actions taken for the above two areas include continuing to develop and strengthen our curriculum and offer, developing and sharing our Nar Valley Pedagogy (methods of teaching), providing the children with Knowledge organisers and vocabulary for various subjects and redesigning our system for enabling subject leaders to monitor other subjects, continue to develop the strong subject knowledge of all national curriculum subjects, developing the phonics provision through Read, Write, Inc and ensuring writing is developed, specifically punctuation and developing interventions through our partnership with a company called PixL, developing spelling and grammar and further developing Early Years provision.

We were pleased with our progress in these areas, the impact of which has been seen in many of our end of year results, our increased and strong attendance in comparison to national and our children's involvement with our community and their views. We continue to work hard on them to achieve our maximum aspirations in each area.

For those families who are new to us, you are most welcome indeed and to our current families, it is great to see you all back again and we are glad to be continuing to work in partnership with you. The children have made an amazing start back and we are seeing many of our school values reflected in the attitudes and behaviours of the children. It was lovely to welcome our new Reception children, as well as other new members across the school, on Wednesday. We have many exciting plans for this year, both in the children's learning and within the wider school and community experience that we look forward to sharing alongside you. See you soon, either on the gate or at various events; we have a Summer Fete in Castle Acre on Sunday 10th so we may see you there.

Remember, our door is always open and the kettle always on so please do come and see us if you have any questions, concerns or queries.

With very best wishes;

Mrs Anne Neary & Mrs Emma Spaul



Head of School
Castle Acre CE Primary Academy



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