



Somerby Primary School



Working in partnership: Ab Kettleby and Somerby Primary Schools

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Autumn Term Round Up!

Dear Parents & Carers,

This term has flown by and I feel so privileged to be part of such a great team. Children, parents and staff have made me feel really welcome and it feels like I have been here forever! (In a good way!)

The best part of my job is seeing the children happy and learning. I have had a number of favourite moments this term - giving certificates out at the end of the week; listening to children sing/perform in the church; hearing positive comments from the community when they have been out on trips and being greeted so warmly by the children on the gate in a morning - all makes the job worthwhile.

As a team, our first focus at the beginning of the Autumn Term was to implement the Behaviour Culture. Setting routines and clear expectations across the school was important to ensure children are treated the same, where ever they are in school and whoever is teaching them. Teachers are entitled to non-contact time to plan, to develop subject leadership or to enhance their own personal development and as a result there are some weeks where supply is brought in. Children naturally try to push boundaries and a different face with different rules and expectations can cause anxiety in children and then they won't learn. Ensuring all of us follow the same rules, the same routines, and expectations, helps to reduce anxiety and helps children to settle into learning quicker. We have seen an improvement in overall behaviour and our children continue to make us proud on a daily basis, with their manners and positive behaviour towards one another.

The next focus for us as a team, was to develop the curriculum: making sure each subject is progressive from EYFS to Y6; making sure our plan for the subject is fun and engaging and children experience wider opportunities for example visitors or trips, to help bring the subject to life and inspire them to want to learn more. This is ongoing work and we are working collaboratively with subject specialists from John Ferneley to help us improve this further.

I have high expectation and believe we shouldn't put a ceiling on children's learning. I introduced the Rosenshine's Principles to staff which we work on during our staff meetings to improve teaching and improve the learning experiences of the children. This again, is ongoing work.

Wellbeing is probably the most important part of my job. I need to look after the wellbeing of staff and children. We all work better and are happier in school if our emotional needs are met and addressed. We place a lot of emphasis on wellbeing during the week: teaching children how to identify changes in feelings; how to manage these; how to keep physically and mentally healthy and knowing who children can talk to at any time if they are feeling unhappy. Mrs Allen is our pastoral support who helps support the emotional needs of our children across school.



Mrs Fryer (SENCO) works with our teachers to help identify further support or recommend strategies to use, which we feel children would benefit from. As I said too, staff wellbeing is just as important as happy staff equals happy children!

From Spring, we are introducing "Feel Good Friday" where we will learn about mindfulness and the importance of learning how to relax our body and mind to help reduce stress.

We have lots of plans to continue to move the school forward, including improving delivery of the arts, over the coming months/terms and are very excited to start to see our hard work pay off.

FOSS

The support FOSS have given us as a school has been great. Our small but mighty team of parents have helped organise a number of events such as, Halloween Disco, dog walk and the Christmas Tombola. As a result of all this they have been able to fund a number of things to benefit the children in our school, for example they paid for Ash trip to Ferneleys and Willow's bus to the pantomime, this all helps to keep the overall cost down for all families. FOSS have also offered an amount of money to each of the 3 classes to spend, to improve the experiences of the children.

I would like to say a heartfelt thanks to all our parents who have contributed their time or money to FOSS fundraising. We really appreciate it and it is fabulous to see the children benefitting from this.

Parent Survey

Thank you to parents who have completed the recent Parent Survey. It is a great way to gain feedback as to what is working well and what needs to be improved. Please however, don't wait for this or parent forums to air your concerns. I have an open-door policy and would gladly pop the kettle on and have a chat about any issues, concerns or even ideas you may have to improve the school. An outstanding school needs teamwork: parents, children and staff working together to improve the educational experiences of the children is important to me.

In summary, 100% of parents stated their children feel safe in school; 90% of parents feel behaviour is good or better, with happy and polite children; 90% feel we have high expectations and 85% feel any concerns raised have been dealt with promptly and properly.

70% of parents feel communication is good or better. There are a small number of parents who feel communication is confusing. To clarify, Dojo is used for immediate messages and to keep you up to date with activities in class on a day-to-day basis. Any whole school messages or important messages will go out via email. However, I will usually pop a note on both Dojo and email if it is urgent to ensure as many parents as possible read it.

Please also remember that you can come and chat to us at the beginning or end of the day, or ring us/Dojo us to make a face to face appointment with your class teacher. We really want to talk to you and don't want you to worry at any point about any aspect of your child's school life.

What do we do well? Parent state we provide a caring, family feel environment where we look after the welfare and needs of children, with a strong sense of community. Due to small class sizes, all staff know all children really well and the relationship between teachers and staff are good. School dinners have also been a success!

What can we do to improve? There were a number of parents wanting face to face parents' evenings to be reinstated, which will endeavour to do in the Spring Term, covid allowing. Again, covid allowing, we will be offering open mornings in the Spring Term for parents to come in and see a typical day in school. A small number of parents didn't seem to know what was being taught in their child's classroom, so to clarify, a copy of your child's topic plan is posted on Dojo and emailed at the beginning of each term and can also be found on our website and remember Dojo shares activities in class on a regular basis.

Spring Dates 2022

Spring dates have been planned and attached with this newsletter.



These are still subject to Covid Government Guidance and could be affected if local rates rise. There are still some dates to be confirmed, such as class trips or visitors but as soon as we know more will keep you updated. Please note, the first date you may be interested in is the Open Morning of 11th January. Letters with more detail about each event will be sent out nearer the time.

The Wider Community

It has been great to reconnect with the wider community, including the Church, local playgroups and support from outside sporting experts, and we will continue to build on and expand these relationships.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With this week quickly coming to a close, I would like to thank you all for your support over this term and thank you so much for making me feel so welcome. I am ready for a couple of weeks rest to be honest, but I am really looking forward to continuing to move the school forward together with the support of parents, staff and children, in 2022.

Have a lovely Christmas and wishing you all a safe, happy and healthy 2022.

Andrea Brown
Headteacher

