

Newsletter: January 2019

Dear Parents

Weather Warning: the forecast at 2 pm today (Thursday 31st January) does not bode well for tomorrow with a high probability of heavy snow falling tonight and throughout the early hours of Friday morning. While we will make every effort to remain open I am sure you will appreciate this being brought to your attention so that you can have a contingency plan in place should the worst occur.

Sport Enrichment: Thanks to annual contributions from the PTFA and prudent management of school finances, we are able to offer all of our classes from Reception through to Y6 marvellous sports opportunities in our sport enrichment programme. We are always on the look-out for something new and with this in mind Y5 enjoyed their first session of **bowls** last week. Thanks to the support of members of Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club in Summers Lane, Finchley, our pupils are learning how to bowl! Our first session took place last week and it was great fun! The children excelled and I was so impressed to see how quickly they understood the rules of the game and began to master the skills of a bowler.



Y3 are also having fun with **Archery**. This takes place at school in either the hall or on the MUGA. We want our children to enjoy a wide and diverse range of experiences and their enthusiasm for these different sports makes our efforts to offer something different all worthwhile.

Most sport enrichment activities run for 6 weeks although certain activities such as kayaking and boating will last for four sessions due to the increased cost.

Please put Monday 11th February in your diary. We are running a Reading Workshop for parents to help you support your children's reading development. You will already have received a text message and email advertising this event:

Reading workshop for Parents.

I am pleased to invite Jacob Mitchell back to St. John's. Jacob has run literacy training for staff in the past and he returns next month to offer reading training for parents, carers and staff on Monday 11th February.

Following twilight training for teachers he will stay at school to run a parent workshop at 7 pm called 'The Resilient Reader' - an engaging approach to support reading comprehension. He will provide lots of tips and techniques to help you support your children's reading

development. These will include - skimming and scanning, vocabulary games, retrieval techniques, investigating inference, reading for pleasure, the importance of reading and quick-fire games. You will leave with lots of resources to support and inspire reading at home and beyond!

It's a while since we have offered parent workshops as previous attempts were not well supported and therefore not cost-effective. Please turn out in force for what will be an informative and entertaining evening. The more support you are able to offer your children with their learning, the better their progress and attainment. We look forward to seeing you there.

PTFA AGM

The reading workshop will be followed at 8 o'clock by our PTFA AGM. Please join us after the workshop for a glass of wine, soft drink or a coffee to hear about the work of the PTFA in the last year and our plans and priorities for the next twelve months. Our PTFA committee does a wonderful job for the school and the children benefit enormously in so many ways from the funds they raise. It would be great to see you there as I know that your attendance would be so appreciated and valued by our small team of committee members who work tirelessly on our behalf for all of our children.

The PTFA have many exciting projects in mind and you will hear more about these very soon. One thing on the horizon is a **'Sponsored Danceathon'** on Friday 1st March. Children will be encouraged to raise money through sponsorship with an afternoon of fun and dance! Adults will be able to take part too. ☺ Sponsor forms will be distributed shortly and there will also be a 'Just Giving' page. Details to follow. Friday 1st March will be a non-uniform day.

We really do appreciate your support for all we do and very much hope to see you on the 11th.

Y5 is currently involved in an exciting project known as **'Waste Warriors.'** What is Waste Warriors? *'BreadnButter'* is a new social enterprise that teaches the basic life skills of cooking and independent living. Food is at the heart of all we do and we have received funding to deliver a 5 week programme to primary school aged children called Waste Warriors. The programme tackles food waste and poverty, recycling and sustainability. We currently waste 40% of the food we buy and general waste recycling rates in Barnet are only 37% compared to 60-70% in some areas in Wales.

This is an exciting new project for our children. Photos will be published to the Y5 class page soon to give you a flavour of the activities and learning.

We are also working closely with 'BreadnButter' on another exciting project by offering you the use of a **'community fridge!'** I will send you more information about this by email.

What is Free-idge? Our 'Free-idge' is a School Community Fridge which has been provided as a way of sharing food. This is food that may not have been used and would otherwise be thrown away but could be enjoyed by someone else. It's overall aim is to cut food waste and provide parents and children with nutritious food items, thereby avoiding waste.

The fridge is located in the entrance foyer outside the school office. Please support this fantastic idea.

Next Tuesday is **Internet Safety Day.** We spend much time throughout the year helping children to use the internet safely and responsibly. Responsible use also extends to

appropriate use of apps and social media. We know that as parents, like us in school, you too grapple with the negative aspects of the web and social media. This is a topic of frequent discussion among staff and governors too. At a meeting of the governors Well-Being Committee last term, a decision was taken to offer support to parents in managing children's use of the web with the purchase of the National Education Groups (NEG) 'Online Safety Course for Parents.'

What is NEG? *National Online Safety provides accredited courses and educational resources to support UK schools to educate the whole school community in Online Safety.*

At National Online Safety, it is our mission to make the internet a safer place for children. We will achieve this through equipping school staff, parents and children with the knowledge they need to understand online dangers and how best to react should an incident arise.

Funded by the governors for this year at a cost of £540, you will have access to a wide range of advice for parents and carers. The package offers 16 videos about internet safety issues alongside 60 'platform guides' providing you with up to date advice about popular apps and games such as Minecraft and Fortnite. The guides offer tips for online safety, information about age appropriateness, etc.

I will shortly send you details of how to set up your own NEG account and logins. We hope that you will find this resource helpful and that you will make good use of it for the benefit and safety of your children. We appreciate your support and involvement with this.

Graham Gunn

Head Teacher
31.01.2019



