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Message from Miss Talbot

Roof Work

In recent years, the construction of the 1978 part of the school roof has been causing an increasing number of difficulties despite a robust programme of maintenance. Significant leaks are now prevalent every time it rains due to the concrete construction, commonly used in 1970s buildings, which is nearing the end of its life. Our regular surveys deem the roof to be safe, but that the issue needs to be addressed as there will be further deterioration if action is not taken.

We therefore need to have the oldest part of the school roof completely removed and a new roof installed. This is the roof covering the Reception and Year 1 classrooms and some of our office spaces. We are working with planners to ensure that a significant part of the work can take place over the summer months to make use of better weather but it is anticipated that work will continue into the autumn and will be completed in early December. Whilst work is undertaken the children in Year R and Year 1 will move into modular classrooms, this is scheduled to take place before the summer holidays. There is never going to be an ideal time for this type of project to commence but I don't want to delay and then reach the point where work is required with extreme urgency.

The cost of the project is also significant – close to £1 million. The money that the school receives in its budget for capital work, just under £10,000 per annum, comes nowhere close to meeting the cost of such an undertaking. We have been able to secure some funding from the Department for Education for the cost of the work but this has been an

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Roof Work continued...

immensely frustrating struggle. I feel very strongly that the DfE should fully fund this project which is an absolute necessity to ensure the safety of our children and to enable our school to fully function. Whilst the DfE recognises that the work is essential, there is an expectation that the school will make a large financial contribution. I will continue to look at what more we can do to secure further funding or to fundraise—but if anyone should know a millionaire willing to help, please let me know!

We will make this work in the very best way possible. We will do all we can to minimise the impact on the children who will remain at the centre of everything we do. There will of course be some challenges with day to day operations but having navigated our way through Covid, we are well prepared for managing new logistics. Having a new, safe and leak-free roof will be a worthy end result.

I will keep everyone updated as and when we have further information.

Class News

What have we been up to?

Year 4

We have some new additions to Year 4! Over the Easter holidays the eggs that we had been incubating hatched and saw the arrival of three chicks—Steve, Brenda and Stella. The chicks did the rounds and visited all the classes so that everyone had the chance to meet them.

Having got quite big, quite quickly, the chicks have been returned to the Rare Breeds Centre where they will have room to roam.



Year 5

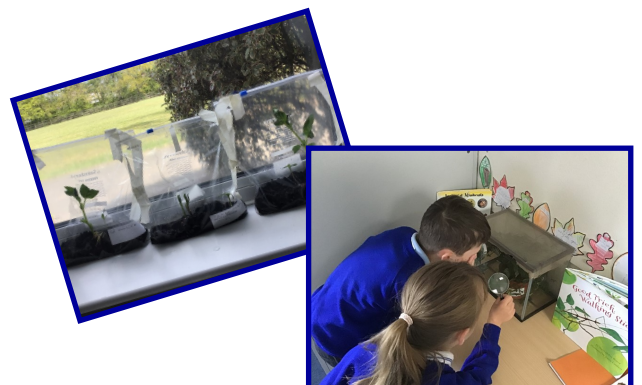
Since coming back we have been learning about Space and our solar system which the children have all been very excited about. We have created a scaled model of the solar system on the field using the football as a sun and grapes, peppercorns and pin heads to represent the planets. The children had to work as team to carefully measure the distances between planets. We have also looked at phases of the moon and what causes it to 'change shape'.



Year 2

Some new additions to Ladybird and Butterfly classes have also caused great excitement. We have some fantastic opportunities for the children to observe living things growing and changing as part of our "It's A Wonderful Life" theme for terms 5 and 6. At the beginning of the term we were given some "mystery seeds" to plant which have grown enormously, we are looking forward to discovering what the plants turn into.

We were also very pleased to be given some baby stick insects to watch grow and observe in their habitat, but we have to try and spot them first as they are still very small!



Year 1

If you go down to the woods, you never know what you might find! We started our new topic 'Once Upon a Time' with a trip to the woods where we found a number of strange objects



and had to guess what they were and why they were there. We saw three little pigs, hiding behind a tree, three bears eating porridge and an a red coat hanging from a branch. We all had a fantastic time looking for clues and are excited about getting stuck into our new topic.

Year 6

'Yesterday we discovered something that changed our lives...' (Josh G)

Year 6 has set out on an exciting expedition to explore the ancient Maya civilisation. Believed to be established by 1000 BCE, this early culture spanned more than 2500 years. The children have made some fascinating discoveries already about this Mesoamerican society from Mexico and Central America. So far, our intrepid Year 6 explorers have discovered a crumbling temple hidden deep within the dense jungles of Central America, and recorded their findings in the form of a diary entry. They have found out geographical facts about the regions in which the ancient Maya civilisation lived, as well as researched traditional clothing worn by the Maya. In the coming weeks, the children will have the opportunity to learn more about daily life, food, religion and agriculture of this intriguing society. They will travel back in time to two thousand years ago, whilst remaining in the comfort of their own classrooms.



Year 3



Year 3 have been developing their detective skills this term.

We have used our deducing skills when reading mysteries to find clues that lead to the criminal. We used magnifying glasses to look for clues and evidence to solve a Greek mystery and have been learning about the features of mystery stories to enable us to write our own. We have been interviewing each other to find out who has a good alibi and who is the culprit?

Reception

Once Upon a Time, in Reception, there were 60 children eagerly waiting for their magic bean to grow! This term we are exploring traditional tales, starting with Jack and the Beanstalk and writing sentences about where we



think our magic beanstalk might take us when we climb to the top! Marshmallow land and Dinosaur World were our favourites! The three little pigs have been trying to escape from the wolf. To help recall the story we have been making puppets to retell each tale. Benjamin decided that the big bad pig ate the wolf! We are looking forward to meeting the Gingerbread man next. I wonder if he will taste nice?

Proud Pegs

I have enjoyed seeing the things that the children have brought in to display on their 'Proud Pegs' and the delight they have shown when telling me about the things they have chosen to display. If there is an accomplishment outside of school that has made your child particularly proud, please encourage them to share this with us. For more information about Proud Pegs, please see the ParentMail that was sent out earlier in the week.

Reading

I can't stress enough how important it is for the children to engage with reading activities on a daily basis at home. Whether this is a story book, non-fiction books, e-book or magazine—a daily diet of reading is essential. We are seeing far quicker progress in those children who read regularly during the lockdown period compared with those where less time was spent reading. Regular reading at home helps to develop fluency, practise of blending skills and comprehension development and provides valuable top up to the directed teaching activities that the children engage in at school.

The children will all have had a lot of recent screen time, so please try to find some time each day to read or share books with your child. It will make a huge difference to their reading development.

World Book Day Challenge



If you want to incentivise your child to read more, why not encourage them to take part in our 'World Book Day Reading Challenge'? There are 50 different reading challenges. How many of them will you be able to complete by Monday 21st June?

The challenges are designed to be completed over the next few months. Prizes and certificates will be awarded for completing 10 challenges, 25 challenges, 40 challenges or 50 challenges.

For the younger children in the school, the challenges can be completed by reading with an adult or having a story read to them. For older children, they should aim to complete some of the challenges independently reading for more sustained periods at a time e.g. 30 minutes. We look forward to seeing how you get on.

Breakfast Club

Our ongoing risk assessments will enable us to open up some additional full time Breakfast Club places as of Monday 17th May. Please look out for a ParentMail in the next few days which explains in more detail, the number of places that we will have available.

I know that we have a number of families who are desperate for places so I hope that these additional spaces will be of assistance to some of you. We will continue to keep our risk assessment under review and will let parents know if we are able to take further steps towards our usual Breakfast Club arrangements before the end of the academic year.

Cycling to School

As of Monday 17th May, children in Year 5 will be able to cycle to school and store their bikes in the cycle racks. The children will need to be able to independently push their bikes to and from the racks as parents will not be able to access the cycle shed.

If your child is cycling to school and will be leaving the school without an adult, please ensure that you complete the 'permission to leave the site unaccompanied' form if you haven't already done so.

We are looking forward to our Year 4 children completing their Bikeability cycling training next week; we have had an excellent uptake. Once the children have done this, we will look at the possibility of offering cycling to school for Year 4.

As national restrictions ease, we hope to be able to extend cycle storage to anyone who wants to ride their bike to school. Cycling is an important means of sustainable travel and one we want to encourage. At the moment, the Covid restrictions mean that this is difficult to manage without bubbles mixing.

School Dinners

Please remember that weekly menus are put onto the school website enabling parents to help the children to choose suitable options each day. Look out for the special Pirate themed lunch day taking place on Thursday 20th May.

Payments for school dinners are managed through sQuid by Independent Catering. Please ensure that accounts are kept up to date as arrears might mean that meals can no longer be offered to your child.

All children in years R, 1 and 2 are entitled to a free school dinner through the National Universal Free School Meals Scheme.

Young Voices – Biggest Sing

With the Young Voices school choir event, usually held at the O2, cancelled this year, Young Voices are instead inviting schools to take part in the 'Biggest Sing' on 15th June at 2 p.m. This is a record breaking attempt to have the largest virtual simultaneous Sing-Along with hundreds of thousands of children expected to join in with the iconic Bill Withers' song 'Lovely Day'.

The children will be practising for this in school after half term but if you want to get ahead of the game you can access the song from the Young Voices website: <https://www.youngvoices.co.uk/biggest-sing/>

We are booked for the O2 next year and hope that once again our school choir will be able to take part. Further details about this will be coming out to the children very soon.

KM 'My Dad' Feature

To celebrate Father's Day on June 20th, the KM newspaper are once again running their 'My Dad' supplement.

Children are invited to submit pictures of their dads and special messages, directly to the KM website www.kmmydad.co.uk

Chosen pictures will appear in the paper in time for Father's Day during the week commencing June 14th. This is open to all primary school aged children and pictures must be submitted by close of business May 24, 2021.

If you have difficulty submitting pictures online, please call the KM team on 0800 525450 by May 7th, and they will do their best to help.

School Uniform

<https://www.emporia-uniform.co.uk/>

We hope that you are enjoying the school uniform service from Emporia Uniform. Don't forget that there is a free delivery offer which runs until the end of June (HELLOGODINTON). Alternatively items can be collected from the school office after this date or purchased in the Emporia store in Park Mall. We love the display of our uniform in their window.



If anyone has any outstanding issues with our previous uniform supplier, this will need to be discussed directly with the company as the school is no longer working with them.

Other News and Reminders...

- We are required to continue to keep up with additional handwashing or hand sanitising throughout the school day and this is likely to be the case for a while yet. We do have sensitive skin hand wash available for any children who would benefit from using this as they are experiencing sore hands. There are plentiful supplies of paper towels by the sinks for the children to use, so please remind your child about the importance of drying their hands properly after they have washed them as this may also help to alleviate any soreness.
- Those of you with children due to start with us in September will have now received your letter outlining the dates of activities and events to support your child with the transition to school. These are also on the school website. We hope that with the anticipated easing of national restrictions, we will be able to go ahead with the proposed plans but will of course keep parents updated if anything were to change.
- Please remember that despite the pandemic, the school's policy about holiday absence during term time still applies—this can be found on the school website. A penalty notice may be levied by KCC in the event that a child has 5 or more days of holiday absence. This fine is per parent, per child. We understand that there has been so much disruption to holiday plans over the past year however good attendance at school is crucial considering the amount of time that the children have had away from school.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

It has been lovely to once again open up our extra curricular opportunities for the children. This term we have the following after school clubs taking place:

Year 6—High Five on a Monday until 4.15

Year 5—Lacrosse on a Tuesday until 4.15

Year 4—High Five on a Wednesday until 4.15

Year 3—Rounders on a Tuesday until 4.15

Year 2—Kwik Cricket on a Tuesday until 4.00

Year 1—Multi skills on a Wednesday until 3.45

Sports clubs will continue into term 6 so that the children can benefit from additional physical activities.