

Welcome to...Grange Federation Newsletter

Edition 53 November 2016

"Being the best I can be, learning together,
thinking for myself"

www.grangefederation.co.uk

Dear Parents, Friends and the Community of Grange Federation

Welcome back to term 2. Both schools have been very busy since my last Newsletter. The children all seemed to have settled well into school and are working hard.

I am aware that there have been a few problems with access to the school site before and after school on the Junior site. As many of you are aware, our Caretaker has been absent and his duties are being covered by a number of different staff including the Infant School Caretaker. I am sorry that there have been occasional hiccups with the gates and hope that the situation has now been resolved. Thank you to those parents who brought this matter to my attention.

Year 6 Residential Trip to Little Canada IOW

Children in Year 6 travelled to 'Little Canada' on the Isle of Wight for their Activity Adventure residential trip. Seventy-two children accompanied by staff and volunteers had a wonderful time over the five days they were away. The trip is designed to encourage children to undertake tasks and activities outside of their comfort zone in a fully safe and secure environment to help build team spirit, co-operation and confidence. PGL staff, school staff and volunteers all helped to support and encourage the children to be brave and have a go! The trip was very successful and thoroughly enjoyed by all. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the staff and volunteers. Without their help and support these valuable trips would not be possible. I hope you have all

Recovered and caught up on your sleep! Thank you again for enabling our children to have this fantastic opportunity.

Staff Twilight Meeting

Following our Staff Training Days at the beginning of term – all the Federation staff met together at the Infant School on the 28th September to continue our work on the Federation 'Core Values'. The session was led by Mr Bill Jerman, our school improvement partner. The session was both inspiring and productive forging ever closer links between the two schools and our ultimate goal of delivering a seamless education for all our children.

Reminder of our School Value this term

This term our value is Compassion. Help us by encouraging your child to show kindness and be caring and helpful to others.

Parent Questionnaire

Thank you to those parents who have completed our questionnaire on our website. We will notify you of the outcome shortly.

HMI monitoring visit at the Junior School

As you are all aware the Junior School had a section 8 monitoring inspection visit on 3rd October. We are all really pleased with the outcome of the visit and our letter from the HMI, Steve Smith, who led the Inspection, can be found on our website under Ofsted. If anyone has any questions regarding the letter please contact the Junior School office.

School Cash office

A huge thank you for all those parents who have successfully navigated the new on-line payment system and have successfully placed their school meal order. May I take this opportunity to encourage even more of you to do so! There have been a few teething problems but hopefully most have been resolved with the help of the school offices. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further problems.

Children Arriving Late to School

Please remember if your child arrives late to school they MUST come into school via either school office to be signed in.

School Nurse

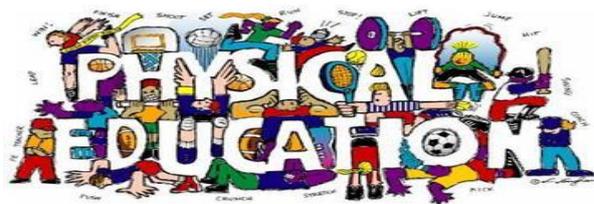
We have a new school Nurse, Claire Dewar. Claire is contactable via school offices and is happy to help with any healthcare concerns you may have or advice you may need regarding your child.

We will shortly be updating our Asthma Register in school. If your child suffers with Asthma, please ensure that they have the correct medication either in their classroom under the care of their teacher or with them at all times.

Office News

If any of your contact details have changed, please remember to let the appropriate school office know in order that staff may update your child's file.

Please be advised that the Junior school office is staffed from 8.30 am – 3.30 pm (Monday to Thursday) and 8.30 am – 1.30 pm (Friday) to help with enquiries and that the Infant school office is staffed from 8.00am – 4.00pm (Monday to Thursday) and 8.00am – 1.30pm (Friday). It may be more helpful for you call into the school office prior to collecting your child. Many thanks.



Please can you ensure that your child has their named P.E. kit with them every day in school to ensure that they are able to take part in PE lessons.

Mobile Phones in School and Personal Belongings

Please remember mobile phones should not be brought into school under any circumstances. Please ensure your child leaves their phone at home. All that children need to bring into school is him or herself, any stationery they need for learning in school will be supplied by staff. Occasionally a teacher will ask children to bring items to school but this will be a specific request and linked to a particular piece of work. Many Thanks

Car-parking in the community

Could we again ask parents to park safely and with consideration for other road users, pedestrians and residents of our community who live near to our schools.

Please help us to be a good neighbour. A polite reminder – parents should not come into the school car-parks to park or drop off their children at the beginning or end of the school day unless prior permission has been obtained from the Head of School or a child is being dropped off for Wake and Shake at the Infant School. Please help us to keep all our children safe. Many thanks.

Harvest Festival

We celebrated our Harvest Festival on Wednesday 19th October at both Schools. Once again we supported the work of the Swindon Foodbank, who provide local people with food and support when they need it most - helping to avert greater disaster and even greater poverty. **Thank you to everyone who has helped us to support this worthy charity by donating an item of food.**

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Thank you to everyone who participated in, or made a donation towards our Macmillan Coffee morning event on Friday 30th September. Mrs Angela Pugh and her team of volunteers worked tirelessly yet again to provide a wonderful breakfast for our children followed by a coffee morning with some stunning cake! A grand total of £1950 was raised for this wonderful cause. Many thanks.

WOW mornings

WOW mornings took place at both the Infant and the Junior School on Wednesday 12th October and Thursday 13th October. A big thank you to parents who were able to come to share their child's work.

FIREWORK NIGHT



A huge thank you to everyone who supported our Fireworks display on Thursday 21st October, including the staff who attended, and to the members of FOGs who worked extremely hard to organise the whole event. We managed to raise **£2950+**. What an amazing result!! We will be updating you shortly on what we will be spending the money on.

Accident in Ermin Street

Thank you for the concern you have shown for a child in the Infant School who was knocked down by a car, during the half term holiday. She is making progress and we will pass on your good wishes.

Please can you remind your children of the importance of road safety.

Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner dates have been set for the Infant School on Monday 12th December and at the Junior School on Tuesday 13th December. If you would like your child to take part, please place your order using the on-line payment system.

Staff Changes

Congratulations go to Mrs Small and her family on the birth of her baby girl. Mrs Sarah Clark has joined our team and will be teaching 2W on a Thursday and Friday.

Mrs Cooper has also retired after 30 years at Grange. We wish her a very happy retirement. Mrs James is also going to be leaving at the end of this term. We wish her every success as she takes up a headship in Cheltenham. Mrs Carol Shute has been appointed as our new SENCo for the Federation. You may see her in school this term as she will be spending time with Mrs James and getting to know our children and families.

We are also going to be saying goodbye to Miss Wilson who is leaving to take up a Deputy Headship at the end of this term and Mr Spencer who is leaving to become an Assistant Principal of a local school.

Mrs Skuse is also leaving to become a general Teaching Assistant and

Mrs Williams, who works at lunchtime at the Infant School, is leaving us to take up a new adventure. We wish them all every success in their new posts. Details will follow shortly of our new appointments.

Sadly we also say goodbye to Mrs Rachel Sealey, Admin Officer at the Infants School, who is retiring after 21 years. We are having a collection so if anyone wishes to make a donation please put it in a labelled envelope and drop it into the Infant Office.

Best Wishes

Louise Seavill and the Grange Team

Homework Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed our homework survey. Now we are into Term 2, we would like to share the way in which your views have helped us to adapt our approach to home learning.

What you said:

- The overwhelming majority of parents wanted their children to receive homework, set weekly during term time only.
- Some parents felt that there were inconsistencies with the setting of the homework between different year groups.
- Most parents felt that older children should have an increased amount of homework in preparation for Secondary school.
- A large number parents placed most value upon reading as a home learning activity, but many also wanted a wider range of activities to be set rather than just reading, writing and maths tasks.
- A large majority of replies supported the idea of a homework club either within school hours or after school.
- Lots of people commented that they wanted to see a return to having homework books instead of the children handing in individual sheets of paper.

What we have done:

- All year groups now share the same approach to homework.
- Alongside regular reading and spelling homework, there is now a range of activities set which are linked to our new curriculum topics. These are available for the children to complete across a whole term, giving parents the flexibility to choose when particular tasks are completed.
- Homework tasks are now available to be viewed on our website and include more practical activities.
- Each week the children complete one of the activities and at the end of term their best pieces of work are celebrated and rewarded with certificates.
- A lunch time and an after-school homework club will be running from January 2017, for children who may need some extra support with their tasks.

What has been the impact?

- As a Federation we have been stunned by the response to the new homework activities. The quality of work the children are now producing has far exceeded our expectations. In particular, the art and craft work linked to our new topics has been exceptional.
- Children are taking far more pride in their work and are increasingly keen to talk about what they have completed.
- Almost all parents commented enthusiastically about the new homework activities during our most recent parents' evening. In particular, they regarded the flexibility to choose which activity their child completes each week as a positive change.



Diary Dates

Tuesday 1st November
KS1 & KS2 Parents Evening

Wednesday 2nd November
KS1 & KS2 Parents Evening

Monday 7th November
Year 5 visiting Kingsdown School

Monday 14th November
Year 1 witches and wizards dress up day.
FOGs meeting at the Juniors Monday

Thursday 17th November
Tour for parents of children starting school September 2017- 8.45am

Friday 18th November
Children in Need - Come dressed in spots! Posters up around school with details and on the website

Monday 21st November
Performance of Aladdin for the children at the Infant School

Thursday 24th November
Tour for parents of children starting school September 2017-2.00pm

Thursday 24th November
Junior School Christmas shopping event

Wednesday 30th November
Wyvern Concert

Thursday 1st & Friday 2nd December
Infant Santa's Grotto

Friday 2nd December
Community Centre Extravaganza

Monday 5th December
1S & 2F Christmas Concert - 1.30pm

Tuesday 6th December
1OT & 2W Christmas Concert - 1.30pm

Wednesday 7th December
1B & 2B Christmas Concert - 1.30pm

Thursday 8th December
Singing at Midwinter Gardens
Year 5 Christmas Concert – 6.00pm

Friday 9th December
Year 3 Christmas Concert -12.30pm

Monday 12th December
Year 3 and 4 Cinema Trip
Infant School Christmas Dinner

Tuesday 13th December
Year 5 and 6 Cinema Trip
Junior School Christmas Dinner
Early Years Christmas Concert – 1.30pm

Wednesday 14th December
Early Years Christmas Concert – 1.30pm
Year 4 Christmas Concert - 6.00pm

Friday 16th December
End of Term 2 (normal finishing times)

Tuesday 3rd January
TD DAY- BOTH SCHOOLS CLOSED

Wednesday 4th January
Term 3 begins

