



South Cave CE (VC) Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs. J. Newby

2nd February, 2018

Dear Parents

February Newsletter

Curriculum

As we come towards the end of a very busy first half term, it has been lovely to see the variety of activities the children have taken part in during the first 4 weeks of term. We held our 3rd whole school theme week to start off the term, with everyone in school taking part in our 'inventions' history based theme week. It was wonderful to see all the artefacts that children across KS1 brought into school that they had made with their families. KS1 also welcomed Sir Teachalot who taught them about castles and knights as part of their 'step back in time' topic for the term and I was very impressed by the children's jousting skills!

All the children across school have also taken part in the latest STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) challenge day. KS1 were challenged to work in teams to produce the biggest heart shape from a single piece of paper, which linked to problem solving and fair testing. KS2 worked in teams with fidget spinners to discover how the design impacted on the speed and rotation linked to curriculum area of forces.

As part of national storytelling week this week KS2 children have spent time in KS1 classrooms reading and sharing stories with the younger children and we have been very impressed with the caring and thoughtful manner the older children showed towards the younger children, with all children enjoying this opportunity to share a story together.

Our next whole school theme week will be just before Easter when we will be holding a 'Commonwealth Games' week in preparation for the games that will begin in Australia during the Easter holidays. The children will be learning about the different countries in the Commonwealth as well as the different sports that they will see on TV and school meals during the week will have a Commonwealth theme.

Dogs

We have had an incident this week when a child was bitten by a dog on her way to school with friends. The owner had tried to act responsibly and had tied it up across the road near the tennis courts, and therefore away from the school premises, however as the child passed by the dog bit her. Can I please take this as an opportunity to remind parents that if it is necessary to bring dogs to drop off/pick up children that you tie them well away from gates/pathways/routes that children use to get into school to avoid another child getting bitten. I am a dog lover myself and appreciate that we all believe our own dog would never bite someone, but when a dog is placed in this position, with crowds of people walking past, they can become frightened and may act out of character and this could cause injury to a child.

Lunchtime

I have been advised by one or two parents that children have gone home saying 'everything is banned' at lunchtime and thought I should explain the current situation. Before Christmas I received comments from parents saying that their child had been injured and coats muddied by other children. When I looked into this with the children concerned and by looking at CCTV footage it became clear that children were playing 'rough' games and were pushing each other over. I spoke to Y5 and 6 boys (as this was the group involved) and explained that they should

- Trust
- Compassion
- Respect
- Thankfulness
- Endurance



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not play any games involving physical contact with others but agreed to allowing them to continue to play 'tig' as long as they played it properly. Over the past 2 weeks I have again had contact from parents whose children have told them they have been injured when playing 'tig'. I have again investigated this with the children involved and watched CCTV to see that children are again being rough during this game. I therefore made the decision to ban this game until further notice, when I feel that I can trust these children to play the game appropriately. I have once again spoken to the Y5/6 boys about this and told them it is now up to them to prove to me and the other staff that we can trust them to play appropriately.

As I am sure you can imagine we have a lot of 'wet' days at this time of year so cannot allow the children to play on the grass so the children must all play on the playgrounds/ballpark, this means there is not space for the equipment to come out of the shed on the top playground as there simply is not the room for it, as when we have allowed this previously we have found children receiving injuries from 'flying equipment' hitting them as they move across the playground.

I can assure you that staff, as well as the children, look forward to Spring when the children are not restricted to the playgrounds and can have more freedom to use more space and undertake more activities. We are also looking into the option of playground markings, giving children different activities/games to play.

Residential Visits

I have been asked by one or two parents about the reason why the Y4 residential visit is not taking place, as has traditionally been the case. First can I clarify that it is not because of the behaviour of the children who went on the Year 4 residential visit last year, as appears to be the 'rumour' - if this was the case then it would make more sense for the Y5 visit to Robinwood to be cancelled for those children this year.

We already have planned the Y6 visit to France, which involves 3 staff giving up 5 days, including a weekend, to take children away. We also have the Y5 visit to Robinwood, which involves 4 staff giving up their weekend, to take children away. As reduced pupil numbers, which parents will be aware, began around 5 years ago in Foundation, are now impacting in Key Stage 2 we now have fewer children, fewer classes and as a result fewer staff. Staff give their time voluntarily, leaving their own families to take on this extra responsibility, and we know that the majority of parents really appreciate this, however, we felt as a reduced staff that, we no longer have the capacity to continue with all the visits. We thought it sensible to omit the Y4 visit as it was felt that this was a very similar 'outdoor adventure' experience to the one they are offered in Y5 and hope that parents appreciate and understand the reason for this decision.

We are quite unique in offering a residential visit to France for KS2 pupils and I am very grateful to staff who offer to organise and supervise pupils on our residential visits and we are happy to continue to offer these experiences to our children as long as the children and their parents are keen to support these opportunities.

Thank you for your support

J. Newby