

Head Teacher's Newsletter

@MrGarley



Irthlingborough Junior School

Date: 5th October 2018

International Languages Day

Thank you all for your support on Friday for our International Languages Day. It was the brainchild of Mr Lynch who is something of an expert in teaching languages. The day was full of language and cultural based activities which were designed to be engaging and fun for the children. The children had an assembly which was delivered by a sign language expert. I hope your children have been trying to communicate with you this week in sign language or have tried to teach you some simple everyday phrases.

Staffing

It's been an exciting start to the week for Mrs Moksa in Year 3 as she's been on a maths residential this week. She had her application to work as a leading maths teacher with the Enigma Maths Hub accepted and this residential course is the first part of her learning with the hub.

We have been advertising for an LSA and a Higher Level Teaching Assistant. Both adverts closed on Friday and we are interviewing next week for replacements for Mrs Marshall and Mrs Lait who both left us at the end of the summer term. We have one HLTA in every year group that covers a PPA session and any staff absences.

Volunteering in School

We would like more parents to volunteer in school. We welcome parents who want to spend time in the afternoons hearing children read or supporting creative curriculum activities. We also sometimes need parents to help us on educational visits. If you think you could spare the time and would like to volunteer, please contact your child's class teacher. Safeguarding is a priority at our school and all volunteers need to go through official checks and risk assessments before any volunteers can start in school.

Curriculum News

Reading – this is our main focus for improvement this year. Remember the more time you can spend reading with your child, reading to your child or talking to your child about their book, the better they will become. We have an exciting development happening next week in school to promote a love of reading for our children. All children who have read three times at home with an adult, evidenced in their Home/School Planner, will be entered into a draw for a book of their choice. A name will be drawn in assembly on Monday and Tuesday and those winning children will be invited to choose a book from an approved list.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'NPG' followed by a stylized flourish.

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Children will be choosing books from the following lists:

Year 3:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks2-school-pupils/reading-list-for-year-3-pupils-ks2-age-7-8/>

Year 4:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks2-school-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-4-pupils-ks2-age-8-9/>

Year 5:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks2-school-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-5-pupils-ks2-age-9-10/>

Year 6:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks2-school-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-6-pupils-ks2-age-10-11/>

All children are now on Accelerated Reader. We have had problems with getting the information for Year 3 children on the system but all our children are now able to access the online quizzes. The software is designed to make sure children understand what they are reading. Just because children can appear to read well, it doesn't mean that they have understood what they have read. If you're reading with your child at home, please keep talking to them about their understanding of the story or book they're reading.

Maths – our maths results improved last year but we still need to work hard to close the gap on the national average attainment. We divide our lessons in school between arithmetic and reasoning sessions. You can help your child by practicing basic arithmetic skills like times tables at home and encouraging them to access the Times Tables Rockstars website.

Writing – we continue to develop our writing in school. We use a really structured approach for children in Year 3 and 4 which enables them to use modelled sentence frames and ambitious vocabulary. Year 5 and 6 writing is less structured but there is an expectation that children are using good vocabulary and using a range of sentence structures in their writing.

We are also looking at how we write in science, history and geography so we are making the most of these writing opportunities. We want the quality of writing in our topic books to be as good as our English books.

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Computing – we have signed up for an online resource called Purple Mash to enable our teachers to deliver really good quality computing sessions. Your child can access this at home both to complete computing tasks and take part in activities that develop other skills such as learning spellings and maths.

PE and Games – This is such a big part of our school culture. Swimming has started for our Year 4 children. This is a statutory session and all children should be swimming with the school regardless of whether they can swim already or have lessons outside of school.

We are also looking to improve provision at playtimes and lunchtimes to ensure our children have every chance to be active. Mr Mair has had a meeting with a company this week to look at playground markings. A part of the conversation has been around whether we can have a track around the playgrounds to see how realistic it is for our children to do a daily mile at school.

Attendance

The target is for children to have an attendance above the national average of 96%. Mrs Jones works in the office to monitor attendance on a daily basis and makes phone calls if children do not arrive for school. We also work with an attendance consultant from Team EWS who works with families where there is a serious cause for concern. If your child starts to fall below 96%, then Team EWS or Mrs Jones will be contacting you to discuss how we can help improve attendance.

Dates

Harvest - Father John Hall is leading our Harvest Assemblies in the last week of this half term. This year we have chosen to collect the usual harvest tinned goods, dried food and fresh produce for the Hope Centre and Home-Start in Wellingborough.

Parent Forum – Our Parent Forum are looking at reading this term. The next meeting is Wednesday 10th October at 6.00pm. Please email Mrs Meekings if you would like to join jo.meekings@iflt.org.uk

Parents' Evenings - We have our parents' evenings in the last week of the half term - a letter should have gone home this week which needs a response from you indicating preferred times and dates for your meeting. During both evenings there will be a stall from Huxlow school presenting information to parents and children in Year 5 and 6.

Year 6 SAT information Evening – Tuesday 9th October. Year 6 parents are invited in to school to learn about the standardised assessment tests that children are expected to take at the end of Year 6. There are two meetings taking place – 2:30pm and 6:00pm.

School Improvement Plan - On the 30th October we have an evening for parents where we will be presenting our school improvement plan. This will begin at 6:00pm.

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