

27 September 2017



MENGHAM INFANT SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our new school year. As always we have had a busy start to the year and it has been great to see the children engage with their new classes and teachers so positively.

Governors Report - Peter Cole, Chair of Governors

It was a privilege to be formally elected as the Chair of Governors at our last Full Governing Board meeting back in July. I am looking forward to an exciting year ahead as we build on the improvements made over the past year. I sense a real buzz of excitement in the school at the moment. This may be because we now have a complete leadership team in place around Mrs Rebbitt. It was clear to me from our first Inset day onwards that this team is working well together to improve the quality of the education we offer to all our children. I would like to welcome all those parents whose children joined us this term. I met some of you at the new parents evening last term and it was good to hear people speaking so highly of our school and why they had chosen us for their children's education. I discovered that many of you had attended the school yourselves, (I won't say how many years ago!). That seems to me to be the perfect sign that the education we offer is respected and valued. I really hope your child's transition into the school has gone well.

One of the responsibilities of a governing body is to help establish and maintain the ethos and values upon which the school is based. One of the things I love about our school is how creativity is at the heart of so much that we do. The whole school is an amazing creative space. Watching lessons demonstrates the creative gifts of our teachers and their willingness to share these with the children and so encourage them to be creative. However, creativity was not part of our set of values. So we have asked the teaching team to look again at our five values in order to include the element of Creativity and worked as a team to think of how we'd see this demonstrated throughout school. Mrs Rebbitt will talk about this further in this newsletter.

I wish you and your children the very best for the new school year. As I'm sure you are aware, good education depends on a creative (that word again) partnership between school and parents/carers. Thank you for all that you do to ensure that together we enable your children to be the best that they can become.

Mrs. Rebbitt's News

Values Change

One of the biggest changes we have had in school this year is a new school value! Our Governors approached school to say that they felt that, due to the number of creative things we encouraged our children to do in school, we should be recognising and rewarding children's creativity as one of our school values. We discussed this with staff and Governors and decided that, following on from all our Growth mindset work last year we would replace our Achievement value with Creativity. The reason for this substitution was that part of our Growth Mindset work involved ensuring children were rewarded for the process they go through within their learning rather than the outcome so we felt that achievement could still be recognised through the use of our other values, ie a child can achieve through perseverance, or through creativity, or through independence and this actually helps them have a clearer idea about what they did well to get to their achievement. Our Governors have created a new values charter for Creativity which can be seen in the school foyer.

We held a whole school assembly to go through this with the children and have now changed our values tickets accordingly. Therefore our five school values now are **Independence, Respect, Caring, Perseverance** and **Creativity**.

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New Entrants

Now that all our new entrants are in full time we need to move towards the children coming into their classroom independently each morning. As discussed at last weeks year group expectation evenings we will be moving towards the same model for Year R as the rest of the school from Monday 2nd October. A member of the leadership team will be available on the main school door every morning in order to take messages and deal with any issues and Year R staff will be in their cloakroom areas in order to help children organise themselves until they are able to manage this routine themselves. The children's communication books are checked daily so notes can also be passed on to teacher's via these. For safeguarding reasons we will be keeping the Year R door closed in the morning so that once children are in the building we know they are safe. We know the prospect of leaving your child to come in alone can be a daunting one and we really appreciate your support with this. The class teachers will be talking to the children this week to prepare them for this.

Challenge Tuesdays

As part of our ongoing work to try and encourage children's resilience around learning and having a go at new things we have introduced Challenge Tuesdays. The purpose of these Tuesday sessions is to actively teach the children the skills of resilience through non academic activities and then pick up and consolidate the skills taught throughout the rest of their learning time. So far this term the children have had to work in teams to "protect an egg" from smashing when dropped and build the tallest tower from marshmallows and spaghetti. Teachers have used these sessions to encourage a "have a go" attitude and identify which children find it difficult to take risks in their learning and then plan opportunities to develop this with them further as they work with them on a daily basis.

Library Volunteers

Mr Matthews has put a lot of work into trying to develop our library into a inviting space for the children. We have also had a team in from the school library service to sort all our books into the correct library ordering system, the dewey decimal system. If we have any parents or friends of the school who had a bit of time to spend each week helping some of our older children to help keep the library tidy we would really appreciate it. Please let the office know if you think you could help.

Facebook Group

Our Closed Facebook group currently has 98 members so around 50% of our school community. We totally understand that not all of our parents want to access social media but have found the page to be a really useful way for parents to access information quickly. The group is closed and parents need to be approved to become members and we have clear guidance available for the use of the group. If you have not had the relevant paperwork and would like to join the group then please get in touch with our office staff who will give you the paperwork you need. We cannot admit you to the group without this paperwork.

Local Visits

Recently, our Year One and Year Two teams have made use of our local area for part of their learning. This has meant that they were off the school site. All parents signed a "local visits" agreement at the start of their child's time with us to say they gave consent for children to use the local area for their learning and we always comply with guidance in terms of risk assessments and ratios of adults per child whenever we take children off site. Currently any parents who did **not** give consent for local visits are notified prior to the trip. However, due to parental feedback I have asked that, from now on, staff give parents prior notice of **any** occasions where children will be learning off site via the half termly topic planners or a note home. We are also going to send the consent form home annually with our data information sheets rather than just at the start of Year R. Please pop in and see me if you have any further concerns about this.

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Pick Up

We have noticed that there has been an increase in children being picked up from school by their older siblings/ cousins. If you or another nominated adult are unable to pick your child up from school and you need to send another child to do this we would like to have your signed consent for us to release to a minor. I have therefore attached a form to this newsletter that needs to come back into school if you are aware that you will need to do this at any point in the school year. This is to ensure school is fulfilling it's duty to release children to a responsible person. The school will continue to phone parents to confirm pick up arrangements if they are different to the norm.

Uniform

Please can I remind parents that trainers and boots are not part of our school uniform and that children need to wear black school shoes whilst in school.

Best Wishes

Lindsay Rebbitt
Headteacher

HEADLICE

Please make sure that you are checking your child's hair regularly for any signs of lice or nits (eggs). The lice will lay their eggs at the root of the hair (usually behind the ears) and these will look brown. Once the eggs have hatched, the hair will have little white bits that look a little like fine dandruff. If you find any lice or eggs you should treat the outbreak and comb the hair through regularly to ensure any missed eggs that may have hatched have not had a chance to breed. All long hair - boys and girls - should be tied back to prevent spread of lice.

Year R

Year R now have all the children coming in full time and the inside and outside classrooms are busy , lively and colourful with lots of exploration and learning happening. Today we took the children on an Autumn walk outside and through the woods. The children collected lots of leaves, conkers and acorns to use in their learning.

We are coming to the end of our baseline assessments and are beginning a two week topic based around Hedgehogs next week.

As part of the topic we will be doing lots of junk modelling making hedgehog houses. We would appreciate any boxes brought into school to help us.

As of next week we will be encouraging all children to come into school independently and leave their grown ups at the door. This will make for much calmer mornings in Year R.

Thank you to all parents who are hearing their children read and signing the bookmarks. The children feel very proud when they get a sticker.

Year 1

The children in year 1 have been busy learning the story of The Gingerbread Man. They have been learning the story with actions and acting out parts of the story. The Gingerbread Man keeps writing letters to the children to find out what they have been learning about. In maths the children have been making their own number lines using numicon and objects.

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They are moving onto learning about 1 more/ 1 less and practical addition and subtraction. The Year 1 park trip was a success with the children finding signs of Autumn and having fun on the park equipment. The children also discovered that the Gingerbread Man had been at the park that day too.



Year 2

We have had a brilliant start back to the term in Year 2 and have been busy learning all about the Great Fire of London. The children have learnt lots about the fire including how it started, how it spread and how long it went on for. They have also learnt all about London and the famous landmarks there. We have been looking closely at a story called 'The Queen's Hat' in which her hat blows away in the wind and is taken all around London. We decided to go on our own journey, so we went for a walk in Mengham and looked at all of the landmarks we could see. Last week Mrs Rebbitt's scarf went on a bit of a journey around Mengham, just like the Queen's hat did in London. We have decided to write a newspaper article to inform the people of Mengham about the journey Mrs Rebbitt's scarf has taken. We know how to write a newspaper article and what to include in one.



In maths we have been learning about number and place value. We have been consolidating our knowledge of the number system and looking at tens and ones in numbers. We have also been learning how to spell all of the numbers to one hundred in words as well as numerals. Something we have been really practising is our counting in 2's, 5's and 10's and are going to learn them as times tables soon. We are moving onto addition and subtraction where we will be using our knowledge of tens and ones to add and subtract more quickly.

If you wish to receive this newsletter by e-mail please ensure we have your up to date e-mail address. It is also available on the school website.

Visit our updated website at: www.mengham-inf.hants.sch.uk