



St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

East Challow, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 9RY

Life in all its fullness John 10:10
Belonging, Compassion and Resilience



Friday 20th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

With the cold temperatures this week, it has been good to see a full range of hats and gloves across the school which have been very much needed by everyone over and above those warm coats. We will continue to make the most of our outdoor space whatever the weather and making sure your child is warm outside makes a big difference to how they feel. A huge thank you to Izzy's dad who also helped us grit the carpark this week and the many children who helped to spread the grit around the playground with their feet to help thaw it out.

Strike Action

This week the NEU announced dates for strike action over the coming months. These are Wednesday 1st February, Thursday 2nd March, Wednesday 15th March and Thursday 16th March. While my priority will be to keep school fully open, I need to ensure that we are able to do so safely. Early next week, I will have a clearer idea of the impact of the strike action on my ability to do this and will write to you with more details at this point. As the strike is likely to affect World Book Day on 2nd March, we have already decided to move this to Wednesday 1st March instead. Family Science Event is also likely to be affected so this will move to Thursday 23rd March.

Children's Mental Health Week 'Let's Connect' February 6th – 12th, 2023

Children's Mental Health Week is organized by the [Place2Be](#) charity and is taking place from Feb 6th-12th. This year's theme is 'Let's Connect' to encourage children (and adults) to look at how we can make meaningful connections. When we have healthy connections – to family, friends and others – this can support our mental health and our sense of wellbeing. In the lead-up to the 6th of February, we would like to reach out and see how far our connections as a school reach. We are asking members of our community who have any family, friends or colleagues in another part of the world to ask for a post card or message which we can add to a display in the school hall. The plan is to display any messages around the map of the world on the wall so that we can see the connections that we as a school have to the wider world. If you have any messages or cards, please can they be passed to class teachers/Mrs Mallinson.

Mrs Rooke, new Headteacher visiting

Yesterday Mrs Rooke came to St Nics to meet with me for the first of many visits as part of our handover. Her next visit is planned for Wednesday 8th February in the afternoon where children will have the chance to meet her. She will also spend some time with myself and staff at the end of the day too. For some children the change may be unsettling and while we are doing everything we can to ensure minimum disruption, if your child is worried about the change, please either speak to your child's teacher or myself so we can support.

Fun Club

Our Fun Club is incredibly popular and on many days we are full, particularly in the middle of the week. If you have missed the cut off to book a place for the next week (Thursday midnight), we may not be able to accommodate you but we will always try. I also wanted to remind you that the pick up time for Monday to Thursday is 5.30pm and 5pm on Friday. If you arrive after this time, we will be adding on a late pick up charge to cover additional staffing costs. If you are running late, or need to contact Fun Club after 4pm please call the school mobile on 07442368604.



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Dates this term

Thursday 2nd February – Small Schools netball competition (hosted here at St Nics). This will be for the netball club only.

Friday 3rd February – Red Kites Cake Sale

Monday 6th February – Friday 10th February – Children's Mental Health week

Tuesday 7th February – Internet Safety Day

Thursday 9th February – House Sports (Reception, KS1 and KS2), Red Kites Bread Making Day

End of Term 3 – Friday 10th February at 3pm

Wednesday 1st March – World Book Day. We will be doing a range of activities across the school and your child can come in dressed as their favourite book character if they would like to.

Saturday 4th March – Friends Social Evening at the Legion (details to follow)

Thursday 23rd March – Family Science Event

Friday 24th March – Owls Class Cake Sale

Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th March – Parents Meetings with teachers

Wednesday 29th March – Festival of Voices (time TBC but will be evening)

Thursday 30th March – Easter Service in church

End of Term 4 – Friday 31st March at 12pm

What's been going on around the school

Wrens

The Wrens have been busy this week decorating view finders with greenery, which we used on our learning walk. We all dressed warmly to explore the Forest school area and looked through our view finders to see trees, ice, leaves, bark, birds, an airplane and two dogs and their owners in the park. The children had great fun exploring the area; breaking the ice that they found in buckets and puddles and swinging on the tree swings.

This week we have used our fine motor skills to practice drawing and cutting along different patterned lines. We have looked at and named 2D shapes, drawing around them to make different pictures. As part of our 'Marvelous Machines' topic we gave our Bee Bots instructions to move to selected shapes on the floor. The Bee Bots have arrows on the top of them, which the children then select to move in four directions.

During the week we have been singing nursery and number rhymes, as well as doing action to Wiggle Woo and our hello song.

Next week we will be focusing on celebrating Chinese New Year.

Mrs Betts and the Early Years Team

Kingfishers

Another fun filled week in reception. At the start of the week we used the weather conditions to our advantage during outdoor learning, linking the lesson with maths. The children were comparing different sizes and shapes of broken ice and creating reoccurring patterns with sticks, leaves and other bits that they found.

For the topic we had a go at connecting electrical wires (pipe cleaners, straws and pegs) and learnt about electricity. When my internet was down for a little while the children came up with the fantastic idea to create a long line of electrical wires and see if they were able to fix the internet, the tools were also used to 'fix' the wires to the wall and they thought about other ways that they could make the electrical wires more efficient. In line with inventing machines, we read 'Izzy Gizmo' this week and I couldn't recommend it more. The children were engrossed in the story, and had many questions to ask and their own experiences of inventing things to share with the class. They expressed that certain parts made them feel a bit sad but it was a happy ending and Beth made a lovely comment that "Izzy Gizmo was resilient as she didn't give up".



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We have been learning Mrs Armitage on Wheels by heart, using pictures and actions to help. The children are remembering the order of events well and are throwing themselves in the acting. They innovated the end of the story to Mrs Armitage's bike fly ingoff and landing in South America.

During snack we have introduce a menu of what we are eating/drinking and all the children write what they are having. This will show progression and hopefully be an easy way to improve letter formation and provide a purpose for writing.

During PE I gave the children a choice as to which story they'd like to follow on the 'Let's move' programme. They chose 'The smartest giant in town' and it involves listening to parts of the story and following instruction whilst moving as characters within the story. They have enjoyed this and confidently move around the hall, imitating characters, listening and avoiding bumping into their peers.

The most exciting part of the week was meeting our class snails. We will be watching them grow and learning about them. It's great to give the children some responsibly of looking after animals and am sure the snails will be very happy.

Finally, we are missing red ski gloves, if anyone has spotted them, please let me know. Thank you!

Miss Dyet, Mrs Alexander and Mrs Busserolle.

Robins

This week, in English and geography, Robin Class have been working hard designing and drawing their own imagined islands, applying their knowledge of physical and human features to do this and creating short descriptions of each feature. As our outdoor learning, we explored the Forest School area, enjoying using the facilities to play, create and imagine. We also noticed the effect of the cold, spotting quite thick ice in the large tyres. We were lucky that the sun came out for us, so it wasn't too cold.

In art, we looked at the work of eco sculptor, Angela Pozzi and the amazing 3d animal sculptures she and a team of beachcombers make from rubbish washed up on the beach. She uses the incredible pieces to raise awareness of the issue of plastics on beaches and in the ocean.

In maths, Year 2s have been looking at different ways to add two digit and one digit numbers, whilst Year 1s have been exploring the place value of two digit numbers in lots of different ways.

We would love to have more junk modelling, both for a jellyfish we are making out of unwanted packaging and recycling and for a science project that we are also doing. Thank you for your help.



Ms Winter and Mrs Miller

Owls

This week in Owls we have been focusing on classroom commands in French. The children enjoyed learning new vocabulary and using actions to support their recall. The children then had the task of encoding numbers to create French letters. Using these letters, they then had to make French words about commands. The children then had to translate these words into English. They were brilliant at this and worked hard to practice their pronunciation.

In PE we continued our tag rugby training. We played a new game called alliance, allowing the children to think strategically and as a team. The children are getting increasingly fast at moving around with their tags and how best to take their opponents tags. They worked hard in this game and really got the hang of how to move as one unit and how they can support each other when being attacked.

In Science we did a practical experiment focusing on Sedimentary, Metamorphic and Igneous rock. In pairs the children used starburst to represent the different forms of rocks. Making the cubes into small pieces and discussing

how the rocks can change through pressure and heat. We then melted the starburst and formed these to represent Igneous rock. The children loved doing this and could see the clear differences in the formations of the rocks and could identify this. I am very proud of them for not eating them even though they were very tempted in the process!

Miss Batty

Red Kites

The highlight of the week was Dr Smyth coming in to talk to us about her experiences in the Arctic. The children were very interested in how she and her colleagues kept themselves safe from polar bears! The difference between the photographs the children were shown and their previous ideas of what the 'North Pole' looked like was a talking point for many.

This week we have been working hard to improve our vocabulary choices in our writing. Next week we will be writing letters in role as applicants to join Ernest Shackleton on his Trans-Antarctic Expedition and I am sure they will be very persuasive, based on the ideas that have been shared already.

On Thursday, we spent more of the afternoon than usual on PE as we learned how to put out the gymnastics equipment safely. I was really impressed by the way that the children's confidence grew over the afternoon with many starting to challenge themselves to improve their performance. Now that we are able to put out and clear away the apparatus as a team, we will be able to focus more on techniques and developing clear sequences. I am looking forward to being able to share some photographs with you all in the coming weeks.

Finally, in History, we began to investigate significant events in the timeline of Antarctic Discovery. Having drawn a timeline into books that went from 1770 to 2023, many of us quickly realised we were going to have rather a gap between Captain Cook crossing the Antarctic Circle in 1773 and the next recorded sightings of Antarctica in 1820. It was clear from the information gathered that 'The Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration' was also the busiest point!

Mrs Mallinson and Mrs Richards

High 5's

Kingfishers

George- Fantastic problem solving in maths

Nico- For being focused, showing that he is ready to learn and always helping at tidy up time

Robins

Mia for her great spoken description of her own imagined island.

Osiris for her amazing artwork on the planets.

Owls

Caitlin for being the best she can be and being such a positive person in the classroom

Ethan in PE for being enthusiastic and trying hard.



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Red Kites

Esther for being the best that she can be in all lessons this week.

Tyler for going out of his way to do things because they are the right thing to do, even when he could have chosen not to.

Have a lovely weekend,

Best Wishes

Heather Richards and the St Nics Team



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