

The Whartons' Newsletter

15/3/2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a joy it has been to welcome all the children back to school. It seemed a long time in the waiting but after just a week back it feels like the children were never away.

The children have taken the transition back into school in their stride, and I am amazed at how they have all just slotted into the routines of hand washing, observing distancing when lining up and passing other bubbles in the playground. If you notice your child's hands are becoming dry or irritated then please feel free to send hand cream in with them, I am afraid though the children will have to put the cream on themselves to minimize skin to skin contact.



Assemblies

Our assembly theme for this half term is Healthy Me. We will be exploring how to keep mind and body healthy. We will be looking at the importance of sleep, exercise and a balanced diet, as well as taking time to relax and sharing both worries and positive thoughts with others, in order to promote wellbeing.

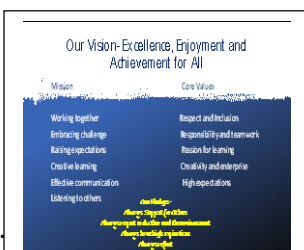
It was lovely to have led my first assembly zoom with all classes in school last week, I can't wait now until we can all be together again in the hall for a more interactive gathering.

We are reintroducing certificate assemblies on Friday mornings too, where children's dedication to our Golden rules will be shared and celebrated.

Our Ethos, Vision, Mission and values

Last week, via assembly and class activities, we revisited with the children how we would like our school to be. We discussed our Golden Rules, the vision of Excellence, Enjoyment and Achievement for all and what we all must do to ensure everyone feels part of our inclusive and supportive school family.

The children worked together to explore each of our Golden Rules and outlined what everyone needed to be doing in order to keep our Golden rules. The children collected ideas and depicted what each will look like in different situations and for different ages. For example, what does 'being kind' look like in the KS2 playground? Each class also reconstructed their own class charters, deciding what pledges they would make to each other and themselves. It is important after all the time spent apart, the children have time, and a voice, to clarify what is important as a whole school. To look at what we all do to make sure everyone thrives.



Closing Gaps

We have planned an extensive range of strategies to ensure children close any gaps in learning due to the lockdown. This includes intervention programmes, whole class recapping of knowledge and working in groups with teachers and peers to revise and model key strategies. We have also taken advantage of Government funding to facilitate small groups of children working together with either our teachers, support staff or tutors. Alongside this blended approach we will track pupils against objectives for their year groups and build on prior knowledge by revisiting learning.

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Diary Dates

Online Parents Evenings- Tues

23rd March-3.30-6pm & Thurs

25th March-3.30-7pm

Thurs 1st April-School Closes
for Easter Break

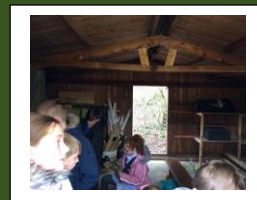
Monday 19th April School
Reopens

Monday 3rd May-May Day
Holiday

Children Enjoying Collaboration and Outdoor Learning as We All Come Back Together

To support children in their return to school we are revisiting the Recovery Curriculum approaches which were planned and carried out in September, following the first lockdown. We are employing varied strategies to help the children settle back into the routines of school, feel safe and secure and gradually close any gaps in learning. One key strategy is to encourage learning behaviours and plan many opportunities to learn from each other. We are focusing on sharing strategies and expertise and reintroduce the idea that we learn best from mistakes and through problem solving.

Teachers are planning group tasks which revisit key objectives in a positive exciting context. This gives children the opportunity to tackle tricky concepts in the safety of a group and embrace their learning without worrying about what they don't understand. It has been super to see children from across the year groups problem solving in the wildlife area and creating models in groups on the playground. Year 5 have created sentences, focusing on wide ranges of language features and grammatical content whilst making stick stacks!



Science Quality Mark

Towards the end of last year Mr Young, our science subject leader, embarked on an exciting journey towards gaining the prestigious Science Quality Mark for school, SQM. Mr Young has joined a group of colleagues from across the Red Kite Teaching Alliance to develop excellent science teaching and learning within their own schools and across the alliance. Through conferences the leaders will explore current research, worked in close collaboration, shared good practice and jointly plan. Mr Young will explore how to improve the teaching and learning of science at The Whartons. Having already audited current approaches and created an action plan, Mr Young will spend the next year and a bit introducing and embedding new practices which enhance research-based practice and learning. In the last week Mr Young has supported teachers in 'smashing stereotypes' when learning about science and scientists, promoting role models in science which engage all children. I will keep everyone up to date with our progress towards the award as we move through the year.



A final Note: Please could everyone be mindful of parking sensibly and safely near school. There have been reports that an ambulance could not get down one road which was narrowed by cars parked on both sides.

Julia Dickson