



HEADTEACHER NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2023



Imagine Believe Persevere Achieve

DEAR PARENTS

It's been another exciting term at Parkwood and as spring is finally starting to arrive, the school has started to burst into the colours of flowers and new leaves. Having had snow at the start and end of winter, we are all looking forward to warmer weather.

TERM 5 AND 6

Term 5 is a very important term for lots of our children, in terms of assessments. Year 6 have their end of Key Stage SATs tests and Year 2 have Key Stage 1 tests to help inform their teachers of how well they are doing. The following term, Year 1 and 2 have their phonics screenings and Year 4 have their times tables assessment. It's a lot of different assessments for young people. As ever, we will support and help the pupils, to have confidence and just do their best. For Year 6 in particular, the end of the Key Stage Assessments, represents the start of their transition and the many exciting opportunities that go with that, when they can enjoy their last weeks at Parkwood and celebrate their time at the school as well as next steps.

Some handy reminders as we prepare for a new term.

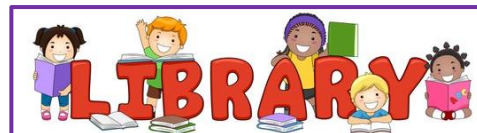
- The cones have all gone, which is a relief, but please could parents stay in the areas which were previously coned off so that staff can see the class at the point at which they arrive and leave
- No dogs on the school site please
- No vaping on the school site please
- Please use the crossing if at all possible. We have large numbers of families, crossing opposite the main gate, rather than using the crossing and we have had some narrow misses. Some drivers don't slow down when they pass the school and it is a potential accident waiting to happen
- Please Please Please... put name labels on your children's clothing. We have tonnes of lost property each term (lots more girl's cardigans than ever before) and many items have no name. If they are named, our pupils and housekeeping team will quickly re-unite them with their owners

ONLINE SAFETY TALK FOR YEAR 4, 5 AND 6 PARENTS – 25TH APRIL

Sofie Wheeldon, Medway's Child Health Management lead, and the expert on all things PSHE, will be giving a helpful talk about online safety, for Parents, on Tuesday April 25th, at 2pm until 3pm, in the Junior Hall. This talk will be for the parents of our oldest pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 and will help parents to navigate the dangers of the many apps, games and forums children can access and support their online safety. We all acknowledge that this is a growing problem for young people in society and the school and the right advice and guidance for parents is essential. All parents of children of these year groups are welcome. I will send further reminders in the days ahead.

WIGMORE LIBRARY

A big thank you to our friends at Wigmore Library, who have loaned the school over 200 books, fiction and non-fiction, age appropriate and selected by their librarians, to be used in every year group. This is a lovely gesture on their part as the school continues to promote and encourage a love of reading.



Wigmore Library is a lovely place you can walk to, cutting through footpaths and joining will give children lots of access to books to borrow, without the expense of buying.

COMIC RELIEF

Thank you to the children who brought in spare change for Comic Relief day. It looks like it will total around £200 to be able to donate, mainly in coppers and small change. This is really generous, when things are stretched for so many people, but also a great cause.



The children had access to lots of sports coaches and different activities during the afternoon. It was wet and muddy for some, but the children, coaches and teachers, seemed to really enjoy it and I'd like to thank Mrs Baker, Mrs Power and all the staff and coaches involved.

CHESS COMPETITION

Nearly forty children have signed up to play in the Chess Competition. This was staged every year in years gone by and the school won inter school matches and tournaments as well. The popularity of its return may mean that it takes some time to complete and will happen in as many lunchtimes as I can muster, until we have a winner. During Covid, playing chess, unless it was outdoor chess, was really difficult, so bringing it back makes me really happy. Chess can help children in lots of ways and it's great to see that it remains popular in the age of ipads and smart phones.



I ROCK CONCERT

The children who performed in last week's IRock concert were really amazing. Having the confidence to perform in front of parents is an achievement in itself, to do so whilst playing rock music or singing, is incredible. Many of the children who took part have really shown determination and overcome nerves in order to bloom in this environment. I thank the IRock staff and Mrs Stubbs and Mrs Orridge for continuing to promote and champion this approach. The Glastonbury festivals of the future are safe in the plectrum holding fingers of our young rock stars.

FOUNDATION STAGE

Bumblebees and Fireflies have been ever so busy this term and we're so proud of how hard they have all been working! After a lovely Guide Dog named Crystal came to visit us, the children were so impressed that we kicked off the term with a fundraising day for the Guide Dogs Association for the Blind UK. We all loved wearing our pyjamas to school and taking part in different dog-themed activities, such as agility courses.

We celebrated World Book Day with an array of different activities, including walks to our local library where we enjoyed looking at books and learning from the librarians how we can borrow these books to take home.



We were very excited to also have a visit from an author, Emily Ann Davison.



She read her wonderful story 'Every Bunny is a Yoga Bunny' and taught us some yoga poses. Emily was such an inspiration that some of the children went back to class and began writing their very own stories!

As the weather continues to improve, we are enjoying being able to get outside more and more. We are learning about planting and growing seeds, and have had a lot of messy fun gathering some seeds to plant from our own fruit and vegetables. Potatoes, sunflowers and peas have also been planted and we are eagerly watering them, watching to see which class plants will grow the largest. Cooking sessions have continued, which the children are really enjoying! We have learned about Shrove Tuesday and made our own pancakes, mixed and mashed twice-baked jacket potatoes, and have a fun Easter treat to make in the final weeks of the term.



YEAR 1

It has been another exciting term in year 1 covering a large variety of topics. In history we are travelling through time meeting inventors and finding out about how they changed the world with their idea. We visited Leonardo DaVinci and learnt how to create technical drawings and make a parachute.

We are also looking at the Christian festival of Easter and finding out why it is important to many people.

In maths the children have looked at numbers, this time up to 50, and also how to measure length and capacity.

We are continuing to work hard with our reading and learning new sounds. Our focus is also to develop our fluency and expression when reading.

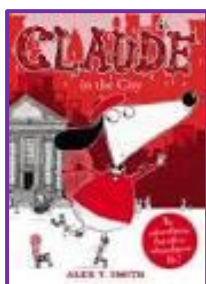
The most exciting event had to be the trip to Chatham Historical Dockyard where we learnt how to make rope, what life was like on a submarine as we walked through, as well as looking at how lifeboats have changed over the years. We were also able to show off our knowledge of Grace Darling while acting out her heroic rescue.



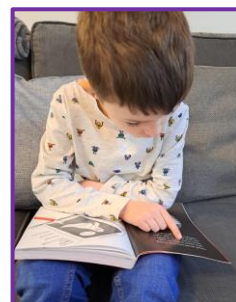
All in all, a very packed and fun term.

YEAR 2

Year 2 have thoroughly enjoyed becoming historians. The children have become Great Fire of London experts learning about how and where the fire began, how quickly the fire spread through London and the measures that were taken to put the fire out. Our project has ended with our children becoming authors and writing their own non-fiction book about this famous event. They really enjoyed watching our Steps in Time history performance. Year 2 have also enjoyed reading Claude in the City and Mr Penguin and the Lost Treasure both by Alex T Smith. We have worked hard at learning our 2, 5 and 10 times tables so we can multiply and divide accurately. Our walk to the church was a great success especially as we walked through snow to get there!



**JACOB ENJOYING READING HIS
CLAUDE BOOK BY ALEX T. SMITH**



YEAR 3

Year 3 have thoroughly enjoyed our Discover topic. We have had fun creating paintings using a pre-historic art palette. Our charcoal art project has produced some wonderful original cave drawings from the children. Making fossils, as part of our Science work has also been a highlight, along with investigating different types of rocks. In PHSE, we are really beginning to understand what a community is and what it feels like to belong to one. We have found it interesting comparing communities of today to those in pre-history. We have loved our sessions in the



STAR studio where we have been using the glockenspiels and the notes from the pentatonic scale to create our own compositions. We loved our visit from Garry Parsons, an illustrator, who showed us how he illustrates books – we even had a chance to show him our skills too, having a go at drawing the front cover of a book. What a busy term it has been!

YEAR 4

This term, Year 4 have continued to delve deeply into the world of Ancient Greece following our visit from Sir TeachaLot, which was loved by both children and teachers!

They have tried their hand at making Greek pottery, and have started to explore what life was like for children living in Athens in Ancient Greece, exploring games the children played.

Next, children will be finding out what life was like for children in Sparta. In RE, children



have learned about the significance of food during religious festivals, and had the opportunity to make bread.

It was great to hear that so many of the children cooked bread for their dinner! As always, the children are continuing to work hard and apply themselves to their learning across the curriculum.

We are incredibly proud of them, and they should be incredibly proud of themselves too.



YEAR 5

In Year 5 this term, we have been looking at the Victorians. Our reading texts "Street Child" by Berlie Doherty and "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens have been based around life in the Victorian times and pupils have immersed themselves in what it was like to be a Victorian child. In Art, we are also exploring the Victorian artist, William Morris, where pupils will create their own wall paper designs inspired by the artist in the coming weeks.

In science, we have been studying states of Matter and the children have carried out different experiments exploring the different properties of each state.

Pupils have also had the opportunity to visit The Guildhall Museum as part of their Victorian topic and while there, they looked at different Victorian artifacts and asked some amazing enquiring questions.



YEAR 6



This week in Year 6 has been heavily focused on preparing for the SATs. Our key subjects have included: Reading, Maths and SPaG. The children have also been working on their projects, some have been very creative by drawing, painting and colouring. These projects are close to their hearts and it has been great to see the pride the children have taken in their project work.

This week in assembly, some of the children received reading ambassador and librarian badges. These children have a passion for reading and they want to share their enthusiasm with the younger children in Key Stage One.

SMART SCHOOL COUNCIL

This year we decided that our school council needed a bit of a re-vamp and as a result of this we joined the "Smart School Council Community". The Smart Council allows all of the children at Parkwood to have a say. We have a very proactive group of year 6s who help run the model and promote it at every opportunity.

Please meet Molly, Emily, Ivy, Jack, Myah and Lucy, otherwise known as "The Communication Team" who were very keen to present themselves to our whole school community in this month's newsletter.



"We are the Communication Team and we meet every Monday with Mrs Baker. Each week each class gets to discuss and vote on a given question about something that affects all of us in our school. Recently, we have had questions about our preferences on playground equipment and questions based on topics such as bullying, diversity and honesty in school. We help to find new questions, look at the results and report back to teachers. In the next few weeks we will be updating our notice board and feeding back our actions to all the children in Mr Moir's whole school assembly. We will work hard to make sure that Pupil Voice remains our top priority!"

CROSS COUNTRY SUCCESS

As I am sure many of you will have seen, via the school Facebook page, the Parkwood Country Team have achieved unprecedented success over the current academic year. Many assemblies have celebrated individual as well as team wins over recent months as the team built towards their ultimate goal of overall success for the season. Their teamwork and determination in many different circumstances have been remarkable.

This has culminated in Parkwood winning a remarkable hat trick of triumphs. The winning boys team for 2023. The winning girls team for 2023. The winning combined team for 2023. In short... champions.

There have been great individual performances along the way which have come together to bring this across-the-board victory. A big thank you must go to the parents who helped to transport and at times assist with the course, to Mrs Orridge for her supervision during races and of course, to Mrs Edgley-Pearce, who has shown, once again, that great things can be achieved with excellent coaching. I'm also certain, that all adults involved would bounce the congratulations back to our runners, who



should feel very proud.

PSA

It has been one year since the PSA was re-formed and although we've been through a bit of a roller coaster with finding our feet, introducing online bookings and learning about processes and rules of PTAs and charities that none of us were really aware of, the highs of seeing the children's faces enjoying the events definitely outweigh the lows! The end of term doughnuts have been a brilliant fundraising extra and freeze pole Friday will be back when it eventually warms up! We have also secured unexpected funding from the local ward Councillors which will be a welcome addition to our income.

Thank you to all of the volunteers that have contributed to supporting the events – we could not do it without you.

If you would like to hear more about what we have done, what we want to do and some learning we've found along the way, plus get a financial overview of our fundraising efforts please come along to our AGM next month - 27th April from 2-3pm. New ideas are more than welcome too.

EASYFUNDRAISING

Partners with over 7,000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to the PSA and it won't cost you any extra. The cost is covered by the brand, who pay commission when you shop from the easyfundraising website or app. If you make a purchase, a commission is generated and we urn that in to a donation – magic!

Sign up here:

WWW.EASYFUNDRAISING.ORG.UK/CAUSES/PARKWOODSA

YOUR SCHOOL LOTTERY - TO BUY TICKETS:

WWW.YOURSCHOOLLOTTERY.CO.UK/LOTTERY/SCHOOL/PARKWOOD-PRIMARY-SCHOOL

WIN!
A MERLIN SILVER
PASS FOR 4
£25,000 PRIZE • £1 PER TICKET

- Tickets cost just £1 a week
- Win up to £25,000 every week
- Please help give our fundraising a boost
- Win free admission to dozens of UK attractions!

PLAY NOW

YOUR SCHOOL LOTTERY

Parkwood

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older. See website for Terms & conditions. Enter by 29th April 2023

SENDCO

Thank you to all of you that stopped by to speak to Mrs Wintle at the recent Parent consultation evenings.



The opportunity to have discussions with Mrs Wintle was well received by parents/carers and we hope to make this a bookable event in the future. If you weren't able to speak with her on these occasions and have some concerns about your child's special educational needs please do not hesitate to contact the school.

HELLO, GOODBYE..

We have said a few farewells this term. To Mrs Watson, who, after many years at the school, as both a teaching assistant and attendance lead, has decided to enjoy a well earned retirement. Mrs Thompson and Mrs Hosking, who have provided outstanding support to children as well as being positive and patient role models, are also leaving, as they have secured promotion and new opportunities. Mrs Cowling, a member of our housekeeping team, is also leaving us, and Debbie Williams from our Caterlink Team. We wish them all luck and happiness.

We say hello, or rather hello again, to Mrs Buckley. Who after leaving Parkwood over ten years ago to embark on a career as a teacher, is returning to the school staff, as an HLTA. It's lovely to have her back and we can't wait for her to start supporting the children.

MR A MOIR
HEADTEACHER



DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

30 th March	Curriculum Day for Parents – Year 3 & 5 Easter Egg Hunt – After School (PSA Event)
31 st March	Last Day of Term 4
17 th April	Start of Term 5
21 st April	World Earth Day
25 th April	Online Safety Talk for Parents – Year 4,5 and 6 2.00pm Isle of Wight talk for Year 6 Parents
27 th April	AGM (PSA Event) 2.00pm
1 st May	Early May Bank Holiday
5 th May	Coronation Celebration Afternoon
8 th May	Kings Coronation Bank Holiday